

# HISTORY IN THREE FLAVORS: THE KANGXI EMPEROR AND THE MING XIAOLING MAUSOLEUM

LI GONGZHONG 李恭忠\*

TRANSLATED BY STEFAN CHRIST \*\*

## Introduction

During the Manchus' conquest of China, the early Qing rulers attached great importance to the remaining tombs and mausoleums of the former Ming dynasty. Emperor Kangxi 康熙 (\*1654, r. 1661–1722) went to Jiangning 江寧 (present-day Nanjing) five times to pay homage to the Ming Taizu ling 明太祖陵,<sup>1</sup> the mausoleum of Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (\*1328, r. 1368–1398), founder and first emperor of the Ming dynasty. He also bestowed it with four characters written in his own hand:



*zhi long Tang Song* 治隆唐宋

“His reign was more formidable than that of Tang and Song dynasties.” (Photo by the author)

---

\* The author is Associate Professor at the Xueheng Institute for Advanced Studies, Nanjing University, China. The original was published in Sun Jiang 2014, 188–211.

\*\* The translator is research assistant at the Asia-Africa Institute, Hamburg University.

1 Ming Taizu ling was the official name given by the Qing dynasty; while the Ming still reigned, it was called Xiaoling 孝陵. Below it will be referred to by its common present-day designation “Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum.”

Accounts of Kangxi's remarkably rich and eventful life usually gloss over these events, explaining them as a "ritual honoring of the former dynasty," that is, as a cultural overture to appease and win over the hearts of the Han Chinese.<sup>2</sup> However, at least one scholar has noticed the distinct attitudes of the two Qing emperors Kangxi and Qianlong 乾隆 (\*1711, r. 1735–1796/1799) in paying homage to the Ming mausoleum. Zhu Hong argued that Kangxi was "modest and sincere" and thereby displayed his political mind and moral demeanor. Qianlong's attitude, by contrast, was "false and deceptive;" he disdained the former dynasty and sought to use his authority to pass judgments on history.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, if Kangxi's visit to the mausoleum is to be seen as a cultural policy, what was it intended to achieve? How was it supposed to bridge the gap between the Manchus as conquerors of the Han people and the concept of the "correct line" (*zhengtong* 正統) in Chinese culture? Considering Qianlong's later arrogance, what was the deeper meaning of Kangxi's visits to the mausoleum? What kind of historical memory did Kangxi's actions here reflect? What can the story of Kangxi and the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum still teach us regarding the "sinicization" of the Manchu conquerors, which has recently been questioned by the "New Qing History"?

#### From "Han vs. Manchu" to "Past vs. Present"

The dynastic change from Ming to Qing followed the conquest of the large population of Han Chinese by a much smaller number of Manchus. How was this part of history remembered by the conquerors and the conquered, respectively? Past research has shown that some Ming loyalists transformed the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum into a cultural symbol. Their homages to the mausoleum and the related poetry and literature offered them a space to grapple with their old political identity and traumatic memories, as well as to express their hidden resistance to the new political order of the Manchu dynasty. Wang Huanbiao 王煥鑣 (1900–1982), for example, wrote in 1934:

When the Ming dynasty fell, the loyalists lost their spiritual home. They visited the mausoleum, pondered in the past and expressed their untold pain and suffering, hoping that later generations could grasp their true feelings. Gu Yanwu's seven homages and Qu Dajun's three homages, for example, were expressions of deep grief by incorruptible gentlemen.<sup>4</sup>

---

2 Li Lin 1991; Meng Zhaoxin 1998, 183; Bai Xinliang et al. 2007, 398; Xiao Feng 1998; Wu Runkai 2007; Zheng Yuchao 2008.

3 Zhu Hong 2007; Zhu Hong 2010.

4 Wang Huanbiao 2006, 55.

For the new dynasty, this potentially antagonistic symbol of memory was not as urgent a problem as the organized and armed resistance, which it needed to suppress. Still, the mausoleum's symbolism demanded a well-considered solution.

A new dynasty could deal with important remnants of the old dynasty through "historicization" and "re-symbolification." By relativizing a symbol like the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum as just one of many cultural symbols in time and space, it was possible to control the historical narrative and announce the transfer of the mandate of Heaven. Indeed, this was Zhu Yuanzhang's strategy when he founded the Ming dynasty. Qing rulers also applied the same strategy immediately after entering the Chinese heartland. The Ming founder and his mausoleum "historicized" and "re-symbolified," that is, they were turned from a political symbol of the former dynasty into a cultural and historical symbol under the control of the new rulers. Until the end of the Ming dynasty, "Ming Taizu" and "Ming Xiaoling" fulfilled important political functions,<sup>5</sup> but after being effectively re-claimed, they could then be gradually discarded.

The Ming founder was first "historicized." In the sixth month of the first year of his reign (1644), the Shunzhi 順治 emperor (r. 1644–1661) ordered the Grand Secretary Feng Quan 馮銓 (1595–1672) to offer a "sacrifice to Ming Taizu and all the emperors of the past":

茲者流寇李自成，顛覆明室，國祚已終。予驅除逆寇，定鼎燕都。惟明乘一代之運，以有天下，歷數轉移，如四時遞禪，非獨有明為然，乃天地之定數也。至於宗廟之主，遷置別所，自古以來，厥有成例。第念曾為一代天下主，罔宜輕褻，茲以移置之故，遣官祀告。

This year, the bandit Li Zicheng has overturned the Ming dynasty; its [legitimate] rule has come to an end. I have driven out the traitorous bandits and founded a new dynasty in Yandu [=Beijing]. The Ming [emperors] have enjoyed their era of ruling the realm, [but] the mandate of Heaven passes and dynasties change as do the four seasons. This has not only been the case for the Ming dynasty, it is a law of the world. There have been examples for removing the Lord of the ancestral temple since antiquity. However, in view of the fact that they once ruled the realm, it would be disrespectful not to honor the monarchs of the past; this is why I send an official to offer sacrifice.<sup>6</sup>

This act had profound implications. First, the order explained that the sacrifice was to be offered not only to the emperors of the Ming dynasty, but to "all the emperors of the past" (*zhu di* 諸帝). Although they could claim many impressive achievements, their descendants lost the state and the "mandate of Heaven." As objects of memory, the previous em-

5 Luo Xiaoxiang 2008.

6 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 1/6/癸未 (vol. 3, 64–65).

perors were therefore at the disposal of the new powerholders. The “sacrifice to Ming Taizu and all the emperors of the past” was a message to the monarchs who had been moved to the Lenggong 冷宮 (Cold Palace)<sup>7</sup> of history that there was a new member in their exclusive club. Second, regarding the composition of the order itself, it was marked by a series of verbs with similar connotations: “come to an end” (*zhong* 終), “change, alter” (*zhuan* 轉, *yi* 移, and *qian* 遷), and “replace” (*di* 遞 and *shan* 禪). They all referred to the same subject: “imperial rule” (*guozuo* 國祚) or “Heavenly fate” (*tianyun* 天運), i. e. legitimate political rule. The sacrifice was thus essentially an act that marked a sharp boundary between the present reality and what had already become history; it was an official announcement that the “Heavenly fate” had been transferred from the Zhu family into the hands of the Manchu.

When the Ming founder’s spirit tablet was moved into the Lidai diwang miao 歷代帝王廟 (Temple of Past Monarchs)<sup>8</sup> on the day of the sacrifice, he was officially consigned a place in the historical chronology and thereby “manipulated” and controlled by the new rulers. The temple had been founded in the first year of the Ming dynasty’s Hongwu Emperor and was later moved to a location near Fucheng Gate in the Western part of the new capital Beijing. It was a place where joint sacrifices were held for a selection of monarchs from past dynasties, and, therefore, a symbolic space for the rearrangement of history and the expression of the continuation of legitimate rule by the new powerholders. Huang Aiping has argued that the Qing rulers’ joint sacrifices to monarchs and important officials of past dynasties fundamentally served to highlight the continuity of the basic political and cultural framework in governing China, and thus reflected the Qing’s affiliation with Chinese culture and their recognition of the established genealogy of Chinese rulers.<sup>9</sup> In the early Qing period, the court directed officials each year to offer sacrifice to a total of 21 past monarchs and 41 high officials. The 21 monarchs included the 16 original sovereigns already enshrined during Ming rule: Fuxi, Yan Di /Shennong, Shaohao/Jin Tian, Zhuanxu, Gaoyang, Gaoxin, Yao, Shun, Yu, King Tang of Shang, King Wu of Zhou, Han Gaozu, Han Guangwu, Tang Taizong, Song Taizu, and Kublai Khan. Along with these, the early Qing added Liao Taizu (Aboji), Jin Taizu (Aguda), Jin Shizong (Wulu), Genghis Khan, and Ming Taizu.<sup>10</sup> The additions were carefully selected and

7 [Translator’s note: The Cold Palace was the place to which disfavoured queens and concubines were banished.]

8 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 1/6/甲申 (vol. 3, 65).

9 Huang Aiping 2011.

10 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 2/3/丙戌 (vol. 3, 131). It is worth noting that, according to the *Qing shilu*, the list of 21 past monarchs determined in the second year of the Shunzhi reign does not include the Yellow Emperor; Zhuanxu and Gaoyang are seen as two different characters. Later documents, in contrast, include the Yellow Emperor and either do not mention Zhuanxu or identify

reflected different standards of evaluation compared to the former dynasty. In the second year of the Shunzhi reign, there was a formal debate at the Qing court on the question of which monarchs should be included and, especially, on how to treat the monarchs who were not of Han origin. Besides the founder of the Yuan dynasty, Kublai Khan (Yuan Shizu), whom the first Ming emperor had already recognized, the Qing decided to add the founder of the Mongol empire, Genghis Khan (Yuan Taizu) and the founding emperors of the (Khitan) Liao and (Jurchen) Jin dynasties, as well as Shizong, the fifth emperor of the Jin. The reason for including Genghis Khan was that

元世祖之有天下，功因太祖。

Kublai Khan could rule the realm due to the success of Genghis Khan.<sup>11</sup>

It therefore would have been improper to omit him. The respective explanation for the Liao and Jin emperors read:

稽大遼，則宋曾納貢。大金，則宋曾稱姪。當日宋之天下，遼金分統南北之天下也。

The Great Liao received tribute from the Song; the Great Jin [emperor] called the Song [emperor] “nephew.” The realm of the Song was at that time divided into a southern and a northern part, with the northern part ruled by the Liao and Jin.<sup>12</sup>

As the founder of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang was also included in the list. At the same, he was no longer revered as the ancestor of a ruling dynasty, but degraded to the status of merely the last of a long list of 21 former monarchs. In a similar fashion, Zhu Yuanzhang’s general Xu Da and his advisor Liu Ji were included at the end of the respective list of officials venerated at the temple.<sup>13</sup>

---

him with Gaoyang. Cf. *Da Qing huidian* [Kangxi ed.] 63 (“Li bu” 禮部 24, “Qun si” 群祀 1): 太昊伏羲氏、炎帝神農氏、黃帝軒轅氏、帝金天氏、帝高陽氏、帝高辛氏、帝陶唐氏、帝有虞氏、夏禹王、[...] “Taihao Fuxi, Yan Di Shennong, Huangdi Xuanyuan, Jin Tian, Gaoyang, Gaoxin, Taotang, Youyu, King Yu of Xia [...]”; in *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* [Guangxu ed.] 433 (“Li bu”, “Zhong si” 中祀), the list was changed to: 太昊伏羲氏、炎帝神農氏、皇帝軒轅氏、少昊金天氏、顓頊高陽氏、帝嚳高辛氏、帝堯陶唐氏、帝舜有虞氏、夏王禹、[...] “Taihao Fuxi, Yandi Shennong, Huangdi Xuanyuan, Shaohao Jin Tian, Zhuaxu Gaoyang, Diku Gaoxin, Yao Taotang, Shun Youyu, King Yu of Xia [...]”; in *Qing shi gao* 84.2526, it is again different: 伏羲、神農、黃帝、少昊、顓頊、帝嚳、唐堯、虞舜、夏禹、[...] “Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Shaohao, Zhuaxu, Diku, Tang Yao, Yu Shun, Xia Yu [...].” The passage cited in the main text follows the *Qing shilu*.

11 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 2/3/甲申 (vol. 3, 130).

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

The Qing rulers next turned to “re-symbolizing” Zhu Yuanzhang’s mausoleum outside Nanjing reverently referred to during Ming times as “Xiaoling” 孝陵. They renamed it “Ming Taizu ling” 明太祖陵 (Mausoleum of Ming Taizu), thereby relegating it to the status of one of the many mausoleums of past monarchs found on their territory. In the first year of his reign, Shunzhi selected 40 mausoleums of former monarchs and requested that local officials conduct sacrifices twice a year in the spring and autumn. This affected a total of 28 local administrative units in nine provinces or other larger administrative units.<sup>14</sup>

#### Locations of Mausoleums of Former Monarchs in Early Qing Dynasty

Province	Location	Mausoleums
Liaodong Area	Guangning Guard	Liao Emperor Taizu
Zhili (10)	Fangshan County	Jin Emperors Taizu and Shizong
	Wanping County	Yuan Emperors Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan
	Changping Subprefecture	Ming Emperors Xuanzong, Xiaozong and Shizong
	Hua County	Zhuanxu, Gaoxin
	Nei Huang County	Shang Zhongzong
Shandong (2)	Qufu County	Shaohao
	Dongping Subprefecture	Yao
Shanxi (2)	Zhaocheng County	Nüwa
	Ronghe County	King Tang of Shang
Shaanxi (13)	Zhongbu County	Yellow Emperor
	Xi'an Prefecture	Zhou Kings Wen, Wu, Cheng, and Kang
	Jingyang County	Han Emperor Gaozu, Tang Emperor Xuanzong
	Xianning County	Han Emperor Wendi
	Chang'an County	Han Emperor Xuan
	Fuping County	Emperor Xiaowen of Northern Wei
	Sanyuan County	Tang Emperor Gaozu
	Liquan County	Tang Emperor Taizong
Pucheng County	Tang Emperor Xianzong	
Henan (8)	Chen Subprefecture	Fuxi
	Xihua County	Shang Gaozong
	Mengjin County	Han Emperor Guangwu
	Zheng Subprefecture	Later Zhou Emperor Shizong
Huguang (2)	Gong County	Song Emperors Taizu, Taizong, Zhenzong and Renzong
	Ling County	Shennong
Jiangnan	Ningyuan County	Shun
	Jiangning Prefecture	Ming Emperor Taizu
Zhejiang	Huiji County	Yu

14 *Da Qing huidian* [Kangxi ed.] 66 (“Li bu” 27, “Qun si” 4).

The sacrificial ceremonies were usually held in the Xiangdian 享殿 (Offering Hall). If a mausoleum did not include such a hall, a special altar was set up for the occasion. Since it was impossible to determine exactly where Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan belonged, the offerings to them were conducted in the capital.<sup>15</sup> In the eighth year of the Shunzhi reign (1652), the court sent out officials to all the mausoleums for the first time. Afterwards, sending officials to offer sacrifices became a regular practice in the case of major events.<sup>16</sup> The mausoleums of past monarchs were thus firmly integrated into the political and ritual order of the Qing dynasty.

By means of this strategy of “historicization” and “re-symbolification,” the history of the Ming dynasty (which was not really finished until the early years of Kangxi) and its symbols became instruments of power in the hands of the new dynasty. The Qing rulers displayed a more magnanimous attitude and more respect to the mausoleums of past dynasties than former monarchs, although this was largely done to highlight their “unbounded benevolence and splendid virtue” (寬仁盛德).<sup>17</sup> The imperial edict on Shunzhi’s ascension to the throne already contained a passage on the protection of and homage to the mausoleums of the past monarchs (including the Ming mausoleums):

所在神祇壇廟，不系淫祠者，有司務竭誠敬，毋致褻慢。明國諸陵，仍用內員及陵戶看守，撥給香火地土，仍春秋致祭。各處帝王陵寢，及名臣賢士墳墓，被人毀發者，即與修理，禁止樵牧。

The existing altars and temples that have not been erected illicitly are to be sincerely respected by all officials. The mausoleums of the Ming state are to remain under the guard of their former protectors, they are to be given temple attendants and land, and sacrifices are to be offered in spring and autumn. All the mausoleums of past emperors and kings as well as the tombs of high officials and worthies, if they have been opened or destroyed, are to be repaired, and it is forbidden to chop firewood and graze livestock on them.<sup>18</sup>

In the sixteenth year of the Shunzhi period (1660), the emperor went to Changping personally to offer sacrificial wine at the tomb of the last Ming emperor, Chongzhen, and to inspect the other Ming tombs there. He ordered officials to separately offer sacrifices at all of these tombs, with the exception of the Wanli emperor’s. Furthermore, he instructed the Board of Works to renovate the tombs and asked the local officials to rigorously in-

15 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* [Guangxu ed.] 435 (“Li bu”, “Zhong si”).

16 *Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* [Guangxu ed.] 434 (“Li bu”, “Zhong si”).

17 *Qing shilu*, Tiancong 9/9/壬申 (vol. 2, 326).

18 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 1/10/甲子 (vol. 3, 95). At that time, because of his history with the Manchus, the Wanli emperor’s mausoleum was not yet included in the two annual sacrifices. This was changed in the eighth year of Shunzhi, cf. *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 8/6/辛未 (vol. 3, 457); later, however, it was again excluded.

spect and maintain them.<sup>19</sup> The following year, he again visited the Ming tombs in Changping and sent the following order to the Board of Rites:

聞明朝陵寢，向所給守護內員人戶地畝數少，以致各陵祭品備辦不敷，止於大紅門外總祭，殊於朕懷未愜。嗣後除萬曆陵不行致祭外，每年應春、秋二次，太常寺差官致祭。

I have heard that the attendants of the Ming tombs did not receive enough land, so they cannot provide enough goods for offerings at each tomb and hence confine themselves to one combined sacrifice outside the Great Red Gate. This is not to my satisfaction. Hereafter, with exception of the tomb of [the] Wanli [Emperor], let an official of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices offer sacrifice to each tomb twice a year, in spring and autumn.<sup>20</sup>

The Kangxi Emperor even surpassed his father in bestowing ritual honors for the Ming mausoleums, but their political character was also clearer. In the 14th year of his reign (1675), he passed through Changping and sent the Grand Ministers to pay homage to eleven of the tombs, while he personally went to offer sacrificial wine at Yongle's mausoleum. Afterwards, he ordered the Board of Rites to intensify their conservation and management of the Ming tombs, "to accord with my own ritual privileges for the former dynasty" (以副朕優禮前代之意).<sup>21</sup> In the following year, he not only sent officials to offer sacrifices, but again went personally to Changping and sprinkled sacrificial wine in front of eleven tombs.<sup>22</sup> Kangxi paid special attention to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum in Jiangning. In 1684, on the way back from his first southern inspection tour, he first sent the Academician of the Grand Secretariat Xi Erda 席爾達 ahead to offer a sacrifice at the

19 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 16/11/壬申、癸酉、甲戌 (vol. 3, 1005–1007).

20 *Qing shilu*, Shunzhi 17/9/丁丑 (vol. 3, 1084). Although this edict was prompted by problems related to the Ming mausoleums, it also made a more general point: 歷代帝王陵寢，原有祀典。理宜虔肅舉行。以昭追崇之意。[...] 金朝陵，亦每年春秋二次，太常寺差官致祭。其元朝陵寢，未知定所。應行望祭禮。至前代各陵附近者，亦應春秋二次差官致祭。遠者，著各該地方官春秋二次致祭。爾部俱詳察議奏。"At the mausoleums of past monarchs, there have originally been ritual ceremonies that were appropriately and solemnly performed, in order to honor them. [...] Also assign an official of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices [to perform] sacrifices at the mausoleums of the Jin Dynasty every year in spring and autumn. As for the mausoleums of the Yuan Dynasty, it is difficult to establish their location, so let a memorial ceremony be held [in the capital]. As for the mausoleums of the former [Ming] dynasty, also send an official to the closer ones to hold annual sacrifices in spring and autumn; at the ones far away, the respective local officials should hold the two yearly sacrifices. The Board of Rites should study the matter, then memorialize to me after discussion."

21 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 14/8/癸酉, 14/9/己丑、庚子 (vol. 4, 736, 739, 740).

22 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 15/10/戊午、己未 (vol. 4, 815).

Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum and to read out in public the emperor's sacrificial text (*jiwen* 祭文). Kangxi then personally oversaw a memorial ceremony attended by the Vice-Minister of the Imperial Guard, imperial guards, and Grand Ministers.

於孝陵殿前行三跪九叩頭禮，次於寶城前三奠禮。

[They] kneeled three times and kowtowed nine times in front of the Memorial Hall, then they offered three sacrifices in front of the Precious Castle.<sup>23</sup>

During the next five southern inspection tours, he personally conducted another four memorial ceremonies at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum. Through such extraordinary ritual behavior, Kangxi was able to express his reverence for the former dynasty's founder, which in turn won him praise from his contemporaries, in particular from Han officials and literati. The famous scholar Wang Shizhen 王士禛 (1634–1711) described the situation – with some hyperbole – as follows:

父老從者數萬人，皆感泣。

The elders and attendants numbered many thousands, and all of them were moved to tears.<sup>24</sup>

And, the high-ranking Han official Zhang Yushu 張玉書 extolled:

自唐以後，凡前代陵寢所在，輒命有司典祀。宋藝祖下詔修葺，史書遂修為美談。茲以當代萬乘之尊，特詣勝國山陵，親致拜奠，禮文隆渥，逾于常祀。是乃千古盛德之舉，在昔帝王未有行者，行之自今日始。

Since the Tang dynasty, officials have often been ordered to offer sacrifice at the tombs of former dynasties. Under the Song, [the tombs] were repaired, so the history books lavished praise on them. Now, the emperor of the present dynasty personally visits and pays homage to the tombs of the fallen dynasty. His ceremonies are impressive and go far beyond the usual sacrifices. They are acts of splendid virtue for all eternity; up until today, never in the past has a monarch done something like it.<sup>25</sup>

An ordinary scholar had similar feelings:

草莽臣林璐聞之而嘆曰：前代天子致祭帝王廟，猶命官攝事。歷代陵寢，遣官事祀，間一舉行，未有如皇帝之謙沖，優禮勝國，恩至渥也。

When his subject Lin Lu, a commoner, heard of it, he could not help sighing: "The former emperors often sent officials to offer sacrifices at the Temple of Past Monarchs on

23 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 23/11/2 (vol. 2, 1246). [Translator's note: The actual tomb was located in Baocheng 寶城, lit. "Precious Castle."]

24 *Chi bei ou tan* 4.74.

25 Zhang Yushu 2008.

behalf of them; they occasionally also sent officials to the mausoleums of past dynasties to pay homage. None of them, however, was as humble as [the present] Emperor; His treatment of the former dynasty shows utmost kindness.”<sup>26</sup>

After Kangxi's first visit to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, the Governor-general of Liangjiang and his subordinates erected a stone stele there to record their tributes to the emperor:

[...] 內監及陵戶人等叩頭曰：“上主念及我等小人看守明陵，□□賞齋，感激不盡。”闔城士民，觀瞻如堵，□聲歡呼曰：“皇上□□明陵，誠為特典，□□百世未有之事。”數萬百姓，無不感頌皇仁，歡欣踴躍。 [...]

[...] The eunuchs and the guardians of the tomb kowtowed and said: “The Emperor even thought of us commoners who guard the tomb and [two characters missing] bestowed us with gifts; we cannot be thankful enough.” The people from the whole city had turned out and there was a large crowd of spectators. They [character missing] cheered: “The Emperor [two characters missing] at the Ming tomb, honestly performed a special ceremony, [two characters missing] this has never happened before.” Among the tens of thousands of ordinary people, nobody did not praise the benevolence of the Emperor, and everybody was overjoyed. [...]

大學士臣明珠、臣王熙等[...]跪奏曰：“[...]竊聞有明一代，於前朝陵寢，未嘗專設人役看守，春秋致祭。且其子孫諸帝，亦未聞親詣園陵。今我皇上所行典禮，誠曠古希觀之盛舉也。明太祖英武豁達，其靈爽有知，必□優崇至意，幽贊我皇上，永享億萬年無疆之福。不獨江寧士庶，歡呼祝頌，即傳佈四方，遐邇臣民，亦無不欣忭感服。昭垂載籍，真足炳耀無窮。[...]此洵堯舜巍巍蕩蕩如天好生之聖，民無能名者也。”

His servants the Grand Secretaries [Nalan] Mingzhu and Wang Xi [...] kneeled and said: “[...] We have heard that under [the reign of] the Ming dynasty, there had never been attendants especially delegated to guard the tombs of the former dynasties and offer two sacrifices a year. And we have never heard of the descendants and emperors to personally visit mausoleums. The sacrifice offered now by our Emperor is a grand occasion, truly seldom seen in history. Ming Taizu was brave and magnanimous. If he heard of it, he would [appreciate] the generosity and sincerity, and bestow our Emperor forever with endless good fortune. Not only the people of Jiangning praise [our Emperor] happily, [the news] will spread in all four directions and there will be none among His subjects who will not be touched by it and heartily admire Him. It will go down in the books of history and forever be a shining example. [...] He truly resembles a sage sent from Heaven, worthy of a Yao or Shun; the people were left speechless.”

總督臣王新命、巡撫臣湯斌、臣薛柱鬥前跪奏曰：“皇上親行禮奠□□陵寢，誠亙古未有之盛典，垂之史冊，永為萬世章程，臣等不勝欣感之至。”

His servants Governor-General Wang Xinming, governor Tang Bin, and Xue Zhudou kneeled before [him] and said: “That the Emperor has personally come to pay homage at the [two characters missing] mausoleum truly is a splendid deed never seen before. It will be recorded in the annals of history and be an eternal statute for the generations to come. We are extremely happy and grateful.”<sup>27</sup>

The stele records the voices of high Manchurian and Han officials, cites the will of the people from Jiangning and beyond, and even mentions the name of the long dead Ming founder. The aim throughout is to convey an image of exceptional morality and to bolster the prestige of the Manchu emperor. After his third visit to the mausoleum, another stele was erected on behalf of the Grand Secretary Zhang Yushu (who was at home mourning the death of his mother), the Governor-general of Liangjiang, and his subordinates. It recorded the proceedings of the sacrifice and the bestowal of the emperor’s calligraphy. Again, the purpose was to express extreme praise and demonstrate that nature’s spirits were all united in their support for the emperor:

禦書“治隆唐宋”四大字。[...]諸臣環跪瞻仰，無不感頌嘆服。[...]一時在省文武官吏，與闔城父老子弟，聚觀如堵。僉謂：鑿與三幸江南，不獨黎元比屋被澤，即山川百神，亦罔不欣悅。而加禮明陵，尤屬曠典。大聖人行事，真足超軼百代。臣等幸生唐虞之世，又得親見堯舜之君。帝德巍蕩，如天難名，惟有仰祝聖壽無疆而已。

The Emperor wrote the four big characters *Zhi long Tang Song* [“His reign was more formidable than that of Tang and Song dynasties”]. [...] His officials knelt around Him and looked at it with reverence; everybody lauded Him gasping in admiration. [...] All of the province’s current military and civil officials had gathered, and together with the city’s men, young and old, they formed an enormous crowd of spectators. The crowd unanimously said: The third visit of the Emperor to Jiangnan is not only an honor for the common people, the spirits of the mountains and rivers are equally delighted. His ritual honors for the Ming mausoleum have been a grand ceremony rarely seen before. This deed of a great sage will outlast a hundred generations. We are lucky to be born in a time in which we can again experience the rule of a Yao or Shun. The Emperor’s virtue is of such greatness that it is as unspeakable as Heaven. We can only look up to Him in admiration and wish Him boundless longevity.<sup>28</sup>

27 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei dongbei,” 27.

28 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei xibei,” 28–29.

Apart from the strategies described above, the Qing rulers also devised new ones. In 1699, Kangxi suggested to the attending officials to locate the descendants of the Zhu, the Ming dynasty's ruling family, and to make them guardians of the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum.

朕今日往明太祖陵寢致奠，見其圯毀已甚，皆由專司無人。朕意欲訪察明代後裔，授以職銜，俾其世守祀事。古者夏殷之後，周封之于杞宋。即令本朝四十八旗蒙古，亦皆元之子孫，朕仍沛恩施，依然撫育。明之後世，應酌授一官，俾司陵寢。俟回都日，爾等與九卿會議具奏。

Today, when I went to the mausoleum of Ming Taizu to pay my respects, I saw that it is in a very bad state of repair, as there is no one in charge of overseeing it. Therefore, I wish to find descendants of the Ming [ruling family] and give them the corresponding posts, so that they can guard and attend their family's graves. After [the fall of] the Xia and Shang, the Zhou granted them territories in Qi and Song. As to the 48 Mongol frontier banners in our dynasty, who are all descendants of the Yuan, I still bestow my favor and continue to foster them. The Ming descendants should be considered for a post which allows them to take care of the [Ming] tombs. When we have returned to the capital, you and the nine chief ministers should convene and prepare the corresponding memorial.<sup>29</sup>

By citing historical antecedents that the Han scholars were very familiar with, the Manchu emperor Kangxi demonstrated his affinity to the orthodox Confucian culture and undoubtedly helped to bridge the cultural divide between him and the Han scholarly elite. However, this rift could never be fully closed during Kangxi's lifetime. After he was back in Beijing, the Grand Secretaries memorialized:

臣等遵旨會議，行查明代後裔，俾守祀事。但明亡已久，子孫湮沒無聞。今雖查訪，亦難得實。臣等愚見，即委該地方佐貳官一員，專司祀典，以時致祭。

At your Imperial majesty's command, we have convened and searched for Ming descendants to put them in charge of the [Ming] tombs. But the Ming have long since gone and nothing is known about their descendants. Although we have made an investigation, nothing has turned up. We humbly propose to entrust a local associate with overseeing the tombs and offering regular sacrifices.<sup>30</sup>

After decades of massacres and suppression at the hands of their Manchu conquerors, where were they to look for real Ming descendants? Kangxi agreed with their proposal. It was not until after his death, that the Qing authorities, under the new emperor Yongzheng, presented an alleged descendant of Ming Taizu: Zhu Zhilian 朱之璉 (?-1730). Zhu was supposedly a 13th generation descendant, Han bannerman, and prefect of Zhengding Prefecture. The emperor bestowed upon him the title of Hereditary Marquis of first rank

29 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 38/4/壬子 (vol. 5, 1042).

30 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 38/9/癸亥 (vol. 5, 1060).

and entrusted him with conducting the spring and autumn sacrifices at Changping's thirteen Ming tombs and at Jiangning's Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum.<sup>31</sup> Modern scholars have raised serious doubts concerning the alleged ancestry of Zhu Zhilian.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, Emperor Kangxi gained the reputation of being "magnanimous and kind-hearted, surpassing all other monarchs of history" (海涵天覆, 大度深仁, 遠邁百王, 超軼萬古).<sup>33</sup> After Yongzheng died, Emperor Qianlong was consequently able to add this deed on a commemorative stele:

訪明太祖本支裔孫, 襲封侯爵, 以承其宗祀。

[He] found a direct descendant of Ming Taizu, bestowed on him the title of hereditary marquis and entrusted him with the sacrifices for his ancestors.<sup>34</sup>

Between the reigns of Kangxi and Qianlong, three generations of emperors successfully carried out a high profile political project. Specifically, they found a place for the historical memory of the Zhu Ming Zhu family's Ming dynasty in the Qing dynasty's new order, and in a way that thwarted any danger to their rule and even bolstered their image of "unbounded benevolence and splendid virtue."

From "Rise vs. Fall" to "Order vs. Chaos"

Kangxi's visits to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum were not only part of a strategy as described above; they were also meant to embody the paradigm of "history as a mirror." The allusion to this paradigm was supposed to give a new direction to the memories connected to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum. The unpleasant memories of conquest and ethnic antagonism were to gradually give way to more general reflections on the rise and fall of dynasties and the corresponding notions of chaos and order. At the same time, Kangxi's use of this paradigm displayed his grasp of traditional Chinese notions of historical rationality.

Kangxi made his first trip to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum in 1684. While in transit, he also visited the ruins of the Ming Palace. He was deeply moved by the devastation he encountered and said to his entourage of Manchu and Han officials:

---

31 *Qing shilu*, Yongzheng 2/2/丙辰 (vol. 7, 273).

32 Meng Sen 1959.

33 *Qing shilu*, Yongzheng 1/9/乙未 (vol. 7, 208).

34 *Qing shilu*, Qianlong 2/9/壬辰 (vol. 9, 853).

明太祖固一國英主也，未及三百年，一旦遂成丘墟。興言隆替，不禁撫然。

Ming Taizu surely was [the founder of] a dynasty and a brilliant ruler; but not even 300 years later, it only took a short while for [his legacy] to fall into ruin. Such is the rise and fall [of dynasties]; but I cannot help to feel melancholic.<sup>35</sup>

He also wrote a poem titled “Jinling jiu zijincheng huaigu” 金陵舊紫禁城懷古 (A Meditation on the Past at the Ancient Forbidden City of Jinling [=Nanjing]).<sup>36</sup>

After his visit to the mausoleum, the emperor composed an essay “Guo Jinling lun” 過金陵論 (On the Faults of Jinling). Of course, Kangxi did not necessarily write it himself. On the emperor’s command and in line with his ideas, a Han Chinese official was probably responsible for the first draft, which he then submitted for the emperor’s amendments and approval. In a sense, the essay might be considered a co-production of the Manchu emperor and the Han literati. It was modelled after Jia Yi’s 賈誼 (200–168 BCE) famous “Guo Qin lun” 過秦論 (On the Faults of Qin). It thus tried to summarize the lessons that were to be learned from the Ming dynasty’s ruin and to present a mirror for the new dynasty. It began with a description of the scene of decay and defeat Kangxi had encountered:

歲在甲子，冬十一月，朕省方南來，駐蹕江寧。將登鐘山，酌酒于明太祖之陵。道出故宮，荊榛滿目。昔者鳳闕之崑峨，今則頽垣斷壁矣。昔者玉河之灣環，今則荒溝廢岸矣。路旁老民，跪而進曰：若為建極殿，若為乾清宮。階墮陛級，猶得想見其華構焉。

In the first year of the cycle [1684], in winter, in the eleventh month, coming south on a tour of inspection, I halted in Jiangning. On my way to ascend Mt. Zhong in order to offer sacrificial wine at the mausoleum of Ming Taizu, I passed by the former palace, where thorns and bushes everywhere met the eye. Where palace gates once stood so imposingly, there now were dilapidated walls instead. Where once the Jade Rivers had curved around, there now lay dried-up channels with collapsed banks. At the roadside, elderly subjects knelt, saying: “Here stood the Palace of the Establishment of Great Centrality,” “Here stood the Palace of Heavenly Purity.” From the [surviving] stairways it was still possible to imagine the original splendor of their construction.<sup>37</sup>

Then the essay lamented:

35 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei dongbei,” 27.

36 The poem reads (in: *Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 40.5b) as follows: 秣陵舊是圖王地，此日鷲旗列隊過。一代規模成往跡，六朝興廢逐流波。宮牆斷缺迷青瑣，野水灣環剩玉河。治理艱勤重殷鑒，斜陽衰草系情多。

37 Translation (with slight alterations) taken from Hay 1999.

夫明太祖以布衣起淮泗之間，經營大業，應天順人，奄有區夏。頃過其城市，閭閻巷陌，未改舊觀，而宮闕無一存者。睹此興懷，能不有吳宮花草、晉代衣冠之歎耶！

Ming Taizu began his career as a commoner in the region of the Huai and Si Rivers, labored at his great enterprise, followed the mandate of Heaven and complied with wishes of the people, and put the territory of Xia under his control. When I passed briefly through his city, the neighborhoods, and streets and lanes, had not changed their old appearance, while not a single one of the palace buildings and gates remained. Seeing this I had a surge of melancholy; was it possible not to sigh over it, thinking of the flowers and grass that grew over the palaces of Wu, and of the robes and belts of the Jin dynasty?<sup>38</sup>

Why had it come to this? The essay tried to answer this question by analyzing the history of the late Ming:

成平既久，忽於治安。萬曆以後，政事漸弛，宦寺朋黨，交相構陷。門戶日分，而士氣澆薄。賦斂日繁，而民心渙散。闖賊以烏合之眾，唾手燕京，宗社不守。馬、阮以器偽之徒，託名恢復，僅快私仇。使有明艱難創造之基業，未三百年而為丘墟。良可悲夫！

After a long period of peace the maintenance of order came to be neglected. From the Wanli reign onwards, government affairs gradually received less attention, the eunuchs and officials formed cliques and trumped up charges against each other. Factions became even more divided, the morale of the literati waned, taxes proliferated and the spirit of the people dispersed. Swarms of bandits easily laid hold of Yanjing [Beijing] and the ancestral altars could not be protected. Ma [Shiying] and Ruan [Dacheng], being haughty and hypocritical scoundrels, led a false restoration, but only fell quickly into corruption and recrimination. The result was that the enterprise established with such difficulty by the Ming, in less than three hundred years ended in a waste-land. Truly it can be lamented!<sup>39</sup>

The essay ended with a quote from Mengzi and the lesson to be drawn from it:

孟子曰：天時不如地利，地利不如人和。有國家者，知天心之可畏，地利之不足恃，兢兢業業，取前代廢興之跡，日加儆惕焉，則庶幾矣！

Mengzi said: "Heaven's seasons are less important than Earth's advantageous terrain, and Earth's advantageous terrain is less important than harmony among the people." Those

38 Translation taken from Hay 1999. The verses "thinking of the flowers and grass that grew over the palaces of Wu, and of the robes and belts of the Jin dynasty" refer to Li Bo's 李白 (701–762) poem "Deng Jinling Fenghuangtai" 登金陵鳳凰臺 (On Climbing in Jinling to the Terrace of Phoenixes) which commemorates Nanjing as the ancient capital of Wu and the Eastern Jin dynasty.

39 Translation (with slight alterations) taken from Hay 1999.

who have responsibility for the state know that Heaven's will is to be feared, while advantageous terrain cannot be depended on. If one fearfully studies the remains bearing witness to the fall and rise of earlier dynasties, and becomes daily more wary and prudent, then one may succeed.<sup>40</sup>

At the time, Kangxi was 31 *sui* old (30 years according to Western counting). He had already sat on the throne for 23 years, and governed on his own for 15 years. During this period, he had rid himself of the regent Oboi, crushed the revolt of the Three Feudatories, and put Taiwan under the control of his dynasty. Moreover, the organized and armed resistance of Han Chinese against the Manchu conquerors had long been suppressed. Indeed, one could say that Kangxi's reign had reached a high point. To be sure, his visit to the 300-year-old tomb of the previous dynasty's founder in such a majestic moment did not mean that all conflicts between "Manchu" and "Han," "Aisin Gioro" and "Zhu," "Ming" and "Qing" had been eliminated. Nonetheless, it clearly showed Kangxi's increasing awareness of the "rise" and "fall" of dynasties, the associated problem of "order" and "chaos," and the fact that he hoped to learn from the achievements and failures of his predecessors.

For the Han literati, such an attitude was in perfect accordance with the way they thought about history, namely, in terms of "history as a mirror" or the "Mirroring Paradigm."<sup>41</sup> When viewed in this way, the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum no longer evoked the trauma of having been conquered by a foreign people, as it had been expressed in verses like "the grief is as vast as the ocean, the loyalists' tears are many" (薄海哀思結，遺臣涕淚稠);<sup>42</sup> or "the loyalists are crying, sobbing and singing, as if living in another world" (涕泗遺民在，悲歌隔世同).<sup>43</sup> It was rather a reflection on the reasons for the Ming dynasty's fall, as well as on the more general and common phenomenon of dynasties rising and falling and the great changes throughout history. Huang Ziyun 黃子雲, a famous poet of the later Kangxi era, ended his long poem "Mingzu ling" 明祖陵 (The Ming Founder's Mausoleum) on such a rather rational note:

---

40 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 23/11/2 (vol. 2, 1247–1248). Translation (with slight alterations) taken from Hay 1999.

41 For a recent discussion of the "Mirroring Paradigm" see Wang and Ng 2005.

42 Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), "Run wu yue shi ri gongyi Xiaoling" 閏五月十日恭詣孝陵 (in: *Tinglin shi ji* 2.20a).

43 Chen Pengnian 陳鵬年 (1663–1723), "Ye Ming ling he ren an yun" 謁明陵和訶庵韻 (in: Wang Huanbiao 2006, 148).

後王棄厥德，社稷如鴻毛。蒼茫松杉路，獨立大江遙。

When the emperor loses his virtue, the altars to the gods of earth and grain become light as goose feathers. In this vast world, pines and firs stand along the way, the great river lies lonely in the distance.<sup>44</sup>

Peng Qifeng 彭啟豐 (1701–1784), who ranked first in the imperial exam of 1728, wrote a poem on paying homage at the mausoleum. It had a strong hint of Tang dynasty poetry, as if he were pondering events that had happened a thousand years ago.<sup>45</sup> Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705–1755), a famous scholar and Metropolitan Graduate (*jinsbi*) from 1735, opened his “Jiangshan qu” 蔣山曲 (Jiang Mountain Tune) with a powerful reflection on history’s vicissitudes:

神烈遺髯久寂寥，衛官老死衛戶凋，曲阿王氣黯然消，衣冠縱出遊，但有秋風號 [...]

For a long time, the long-bearded has lain lonely at Mount Shenlie; his guards have become old or died, their families have scattered. Jiangnan area’s royal spirit has vanished; the officials still coming out here have nothing but the sighing of the autumn winds. [...]<sup>46</sup>

Huang Da 黃達, a Metropolitan Graduate from 1752, wrote a poem titled “Xiaoling” 孝陵 in a simple, straightforward style and, although it also evokes a feeling of history’s ebb and flow, it does not say anything about the author’s feelings. It is as if this flux has nothing to do with him.<sup>47</sup> When Shen Xueyuan 沈學淵 (1788–1833), a famous poet of the Jiaqing era, went on an excursion to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, his deepest impression was:

一朝興廢瓜棚話，野蔓青青夕照中。

In the melon shack, they discuss the rise and fall of a dynasty; wild creepers grow exuberantly in the glow of the setting sun.<sup>48</sup>

44 In: Wang Huanbiao 2006, 150.

45 The poem (in: Ming Xiaoling bowuguan 2008, 614) reads: 守塚黃門已白頭，黍油麥秀歲悠悠。空傳石馬嘶風夜，誰見銅駝泣雨秋。表奏通天頻悵惘，魂歸望帝漫夷猶。斜陽欲落寒煙碧，十裡山陵萬古愁。

46 Quan Zuwang, “Jiangshan qu” 蔣山曲 (in: Zhu Zhuyu, 53). [Translator’s note: Mount Shenlie is another name for Purple Mountain (*Zijin Shan*) in Nanjing where Zhu Yu-zhang’s mausoleum is located.]

47 The poem (in: Ming Xiaoling bowuguan, 614) reads: 龍蟠形勝自當時，輦路蒼蒼野蔓垂。山殿雲煙埋劍璽，洞門風雨暗旌旗。鼎湖漫問前朝事，抔土空余過客思。不斷松楸鶴影亂，嵯峨認取禦題碑。

48 Shen Xueyuan, “Shi Ming Xiaoling gua shi” 食明孝陵瓜詩 (in: *Lidai lingqin beikao*, 311).

As these examples indicate, the association of the Xiaoling Mausoleum with traumatic memories and a yearning for the former dynasty that marked the early Ming loyalists became increasingly rare among the later generations of Han scholars.<sup>49</sup>

For the Manchu emperor Kangxi, this use of the Mirroring Paradigm was more than superficial. It reflected a historical rationality that tried to grasp the essence of Chinese culture: by taking history as a mirror and the Confucians as teachers, it was possible to learn how to govern. Two details from Kangxi's first southern inspection tour demonstrate that he followed this type of thinking. The first is his habit of reading and studying on the boat until late at night:

夜坐舟中，與侍臣高士奇探論古今興廢之跡，或讀《尚書》、《左傳》及先秦兩漢文數篇，或談《周易》，或賦一詩。每至漏下三十刻不倦，日以為常。In the evenings, on the boat, he discussed the marks of rise and fall throughout history with the attendant official Gao Shiqi; or he read the *Book of Documents*, the *Zuozhuan*, and the writings of the pre-Qin era and the Han dynasties; or he discussed the *Book of Changes* or wrote a poem. He did not become tired until late at night, and made this a daily habit.<sup>50</sup>

The second detail is that Kangxi was very pleased when he got the news that the crown prince had finished reading the *Four Books*. He even wrote a long poem to further encourage him:

先聖有庭訓，所聞在詩禮。  
雖然國與家，為學無二理。  
昨者來江東，相距三千里。  
迢遙薊北雲，念之不能已。  
凌晨發郵筒，開緘字滿紙。  
語語皆天真，讀書畢四子。  
韶年識進修，茲意良足喜。  
還宜日就將，無令有間止。  
大禹惜寸陰，今當重分晷。  
披卷慕古人，即事探奧旨。  
久久悅汝心，自得芻豢美。

The Books of Songs and Rites / Contain the Sages;  
Countries differ from families / But learning is one.  
I am on the lower Yangtze, / You are a thousand *li* away

49 This was to change once again at the end of the Qing dynasty with the rise of anti-Manchu sentiment; this point awaits further research.

50 "Nanxun biji" 南巡筆記, 6ab.

Under distant Peking clouds, / Yet my thoughts never leave you.  
 At dawn I opened the folder; / Under the flap, your writing covered the page.  
 In natural simplicity you told me word by word / How you had finished the *Four Books*.  
 A child making such progress – / That you desire this makes me happy indeed.  
 Strive on day by day, / Brook no interruptions.  
 As Yü the Great treasured each moment, / So must you value time in its passing.  
 Learn from the Ancients in each book you open, / Seek inner meanings of every occurrence.  
 Slowly your heart will grow joyful, / And the beauty of sacrificial foods be yours.<sup>51</sup>

The first text describes the emperor as a diligent student of Chinese culture. Although it surely entails an element of ostentation, it nonetheless demonstrates the importance Kangxi attached to classical Chinese works. The second text is written in a natural style, without embellishments. It represents a sincere expression of Kangxi's feelings and clearly reflects how highly he thought of Chinese history and Confucian culture.

Previous research has shown that Kangxi was an ambitious ruler who not only cared about governing, but also enthusiastically learned from Han Chinese scholars and delved into all kinds of cultural knowledge. He particularly valued the lessons he gleaned from Confucian classics and the works on Chinese history on governing and statecraft.<sup>52</sup> He once told the Gao Shiqi about his educational path:

朕自五齡即知讀書，八齡踐祚，輒以《[大]學》、《[中]庸》訓誥詢之左右，求得大意而後愉快。日所讀者必使字句成誦，從來不肯自欺。及四子之書既已通貫，乃讀《尚書》，于典謨訓誥之中，體會古帝王孜孜求治之意，期見之于施行。及讀大《易》，觀象玩占于數，聖人扶陽抑陰，防微杜漸，垂世立教之精心，朕皆反復探索，必心與理會，不使纖毫地格，實覺義理悅心，故樂此不疲[...]至若《史》、《漢》以及諸子百家，以及內典、道書，莫不涉獵。  
 When I was five years old, I already knew how to read. When I was eight, I ascended the throne and often asked my retinue to help me interpret the *Daxue* and the *Zhongyong*. I was happy when I grasped the main points. I daily memorized what I read and would never deceive myself. When I had mastered the *Four Books*, I read the *Book of Documents*. In the *Canon of Yao*, the *Counsels of Great Yu*, the *Announcement of Tang*, and the *Instructions of Yi*, I saw the ancient monarchs assiduously seeking the foundations of ruling and hoped to put their teachings into practice. Then I read the great *Book of Changes*. By inspecting the images and studying the prognostications in the numbers, I repeatedly ex-

51 “Jiangning zhubi huang taizi qi zhi qing'an jian bao duwan si shu” 江寧駐蹕皇太子啟至請安兼報讀完四書 (in: *Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji, di'erji* 40.5b–6a). Translation taken from Spence 1988, 117.

52 For Kangxi's studying and admiring Confucian culture and Chinese history, cf. Wang Sizhi 1987, 270–272; Bai Xinliang et al. 2007, 71–75, 729–738, 754–756, 772–773.

plored how the sages nurtured the yang and suppressed the yin, nipped problems in the bud, elaborated their teachings, and transmitted them to later generations. My mind and their teachings should converge, and absolutely no distance should rest between us. I really enjoyed their doctrines and therefore never got bored of them. [...] As for the *Records of the Grand Historian*, the *Book of Han* and the Hundred Schools of Thought, the Buddhist and Daoist scriptures, I have skimmed through all of them.<sup>53</sup>

Through continuous studying and training, Kangxi maintained this kind of rational outlook until late in life. In 1711, in the fiftieth year of his reign, he was presented with a memorial in the name of all the princes, dukes, grand secretaries, chief ministers, civil and military officials of all ranks, as well as students and common people. The memorial praised his “great virtue and achievements parallel with those of Emperor Yao” (峻德弘功，實與帝堯比隆) and asking to grant him the honorific title of “Sagely, Spirit-like, Accomplished and Awe-inspiring, Greatly Virtuous, Vast and Incessant” (聖神文武大德廣運).<sup>54</sup> The memorial highlighted in particular his visits to the mausoleum:

南巡江寧於明洪武陵，復屢經拜辭，優禮勝國之君，用盡執謙之節，此又前史所未見也。惟我皇上鑄經鑄史，酌古准今，故凡所措施，悉高出於前代帝王之上。

On his southern inspection tours, in Jiangning he repeatedly visited Hongwu’s mausoleum and, with great humility, offered sacrifices to the emperor of the fallen dynasty. This has not been seen in history before. Only our Emperor has taken the classical and historical works as a model and used the past to illuminate the present; hence his acts all surpass those of former monarchs.<sup>55</sup>

Kangxi replied:

朕自幼讀書，曆觀經史，持身務以誠敬為本，治天下務以寬仁為尚。此心此念，恪守五十年，夙夜無間，即纖悉細務，不敢稍有怠忽。嘗觀古昔帝王，君臨天下之久，能持終者蓋鮮。[...] 史書所載，加上尊號等事，徒為先儒所譏，有何善處而欲行之？這所奏知道了！

I have read books since I was young and I have studied the classics and the histories one by one. In cultivating myself, I have taken sincerity and respect as a basis. In governing the realm, I have valued tolerance and benevolence the most. I have scrupulously abided by this spirit and these ideas for fifty years, day and night; not even in the smallest and most

53 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 23/11/4 (vol. 2, 1249–1250).

54 [Translator’s note: This honorific title refers to a passage from the “Da Yu mo” 大禹謨 (Counsels of the Great Yu) in the *Book of Documents*, which reads: 益曰：都，帝德廣運，乃聖乃神，乃武乃文。皇天眷命，奄有四海為天下君。]

55 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 50/3/庚寅 (vol. 6, 434).

trifling matter have I dared to be neglectful. Probing the monarchs of the past, only few can end well after governing for so long. [...] Such deeds as adding honorific titles could only bring the blame of former sages, as recorded in the books of history. What should it be good for? As for your memorial, I have taken note of it!<sup>56</sup>

In 1719, Kangxi issued an edict to caution his officials against needless affairs and empty formalities. They were instead to concentrate on important matters:

朕披閱史書，曆觀古來帝王，因深知為君之難。[...] 今天下大小事務...無論鉅細，朕必躬自斷制。[...] 凡有論說，諸臣不過敷陳頌揚套語，如“勵精圖治、健行不息、聖不自聖、安愈求安”之類，若與不讀書者言之，甚覺可聽。朕讀書明理，凡事皆身體力行，此等粉飾浮詞，六十年中，盈溢於耳，久已厭聞。爾等務須實心任事，盡去虛文，于國家方有裨益也。

I have perused the books of history and read about the monarchs of the past, so I know about the difficulties of being a ruler. [...] Now, I personally make decisions on all matters in the realm, be they large or small. [...] In all discussions, [however,] the officials merely string together polite formulas like “exert oneself to make the country prosperous; to be active without a break; to be a sage without feeling superior; to strive for peace even in peaceful times.” This might sound impressive to someone who has not read any books. I have read the books and understood that one needs to practice what one preaches. All those florid but insubstantial remarks have been flooding my ears for sixty years, but I have long since stopped listening to them. You must wholeheartedly fulfil your tasks and avoid empty formulas, only then will you be of benefit to country and family.<sup>57</sup>

Evidently, the Manchu emperor Aisin Gioro Xuanye 愛新覺羅玄燁 (i. e. the Kangxi Emperor) maintained a sober mind even in his last years. Based on the experiences and the lessons he derived from his continuous study of the Confucian classics and Chinese history, he had a very clear understanding of what truly makes a great ruler. Regardless of his descent, there was no substantial difference between Kangxi and a Han Chinese emperor. Moreover, he greatly surpassed many of the mediocre latter rulers in terms of understanding Confucian culture and the inherent rationality of Chinese history.

### From “Brilliant Ruler” to “Sage Monarch”

Kangxi’s manner of dealing with the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum reflects his distinctive character. He personally visited the mausoleum five times and spared no effort in expressing his great admiration and sympathy for the Ming founder. He did not see their relation

56 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 50/3/庚寅 (vol. 6, 435).

57 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 58/4/辛亥 (vol. 6, 770–771).

as one between conqueror and conquered, but as one of equals. The Manchu emperor tried to counteract the negative impression some scholar-officials had of Ming Taizu and to strengthen his image as an extraordinarily talented and strategically brilliant ruler – as a “great ruler” (*lingzhu* 令主), a “brilliant ruler” (*yingzhu* 英主), and a “worthy ruler” (*xianzhu* 賢主). This special treatment of his predecessor demonstrates that Kangxi also saw himself as a special emperor, who transcended any boundaries between the Manchus and Han Chinese. He strove to become a Chinese emperor and to ascend to the Confucian pantheon of revered “sage monarchs.”

Kangxi’s first visit to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, which took place in 1683, broke with conventional rituals. While still in Suzhou, Kangxi instructed the Grand Secretaries:

明太祖，一代開創令主，功德並隆。朕巡省方域，將及江寧。鐘山之麓，陵寢斯在。朕優禮前代，況於其君實賢，可遣祀如禮。

Ming Taizu was a great ruler who founded a new dynasty; his achievements and virtue are equally impressive. On my southern inspection tour, I will travel to Jiangning. His mausoleum is located at the foot of Mount Zhong. I want to honor the previous dynasty whose [founding] monarch really was a worthy; he should be honored with a sacrifice.<sup>58</sup>

When the first draft of the sacrificial ode was finished, Kangxi pointed out:

明太祖乃前代帝王，祭文中理應抬寫。

Ming Taizu was an emperor of the previous dynasty, so his name should be elevated in the text.<sup>59</sup>

After he had arrived in Jiangning and sent the Academician of the Grand Secretariat Xi Erda to offer sacrifice at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, Kangxi again told Grand Secretary Nalan Mingzhu and others:

明太祖陵，已遣官致祭。但朕既抵江寧，距陵非遠，其親為拜奠。

I have sent an official to offer sacrifice at Ming Taizu’s mausoleum. But I am already in Jiangning, not far from his tomb, so I personally want to pay my respects there.<sup>60</sup>

After consulting with each other, the officials of the Grand Secretariat, the Board of Rites, and the Court of Imperial Sacrifices endorsed the visit:

皇上親行拜奠，益見我皇上盛德深厚。

A personal sacrifice of the Emperor all the more demonstrates the profoundness of his splendid virtue.<sup>61</sup>

58 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 23/11/己未 (vol. 5, 224).

59 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei dongbei,” 26.

60 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 23/11/癸亥 (vol. 5, 225).

61 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei dongbei,” 26.

He subsequently led an entourage of high officials and imperial guards to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum. To show his respect, he did not enter through the middle gate, which was reserved for the emperor. He also asked his officials to follow behind him walking in orderly fashion and in respectful silence. When they arrived in front of the Memorial Hall,

上行三跪九叩頭禮，復至寶城前，奠酒三爵，畢，仍由中道旁行。

[they] kneeled three times and kowtowed nine times; then they proceeded to the Precious Castle and offered three cups of sacrificial wine in front of it. After finishing, they left again on the byroad.<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore, the emperor ordered the Governor-general of Liangjiang and the Governor of Jiangsu to protect the mausoleum:

明太祖天資英武，敷政仁明，芟刈群雄，混一區宇，肇造基業，功德並隆。其陵寢在鐘山之麓，系江寧所屬地方。[...]嗣後爾等督令地方各官，不時巡察，務俾守陵人役，用心防護，勿致附近旗丁居民，仍前踐踏。所有春秋二祭，亦必虔潔舉行，以副朕崇重古帝王陵寢至意。

Ming Taizu was a valiant warrior and a benevolent ruler; he killed local tyrants, unified the realm and founded a dynasty; his achievements and virtue are equally impressive. His mausoleum is located at the foot of Mount Zhong, near Jiangning. [...] Hereafter, you shall supervise the responsible officials in this area, frequently inspect the mausoleum, assign attendants to guard it, and diligently protect it. You should not allow residents and soldiers to get near and trample on it. Sacrifices shall be offered every spring and autumn, and they must be conducted honestly, in accordance with my utmost respect for the ancient emperors.<sup>63</sup>

For the young Kangxi, Ming Taizu was the founder of a dynasty and the greatest emperor closest in history to himself. By paying his respects to Ming Taizu, he thus also expressed his expectation that he would become a brilliant monarch himself.

In 1689, the 36-year-old Kangxi visited the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum a second time on the way back from a southern inspection tour:

至大門前，下輦步行。進前殿，行三跪九叩頭禮。至陵前跪，奠酒三爵，行三叩頭禮畢，賜守陵人一百兩而還。

When he arrived at the gate, he got off the imperial carriage and walked. Entering the front hall, he kneeled three times and kowtowed nine times. In front of the tomb, he kneeled again and offered three cups of sacrificial wine and kowtowed three times. Then he bestowed the guardians of the mausoleum with one hundred taels and returned.<sup>64</sup>

62 Ibid.

63 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 23/11/甲子 (vol. 5, 227).

64 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 28/2/26 (vol. 2, 1841).

It is worth noting that, during this southern inspection tour, Kangxi also personally payed homage to the tomb of Yu the Great at Mount Kuaiji in Shaoxing (Zhejiang). The Board of Rites proposed conducting proceedings at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum like those five years earlier, in which the emperor first sent officials to offer sacrifices and then personally went himself to pour a libation of wine. Kangxi, however, insisted on offering the sacrifice himself, which sparked a discussion on questions of ceremony and propriety:

上諭扈從部院諸大臣曰：[...] 大禹功德隆盛，萬世永賴，應行親詣，以展企慕之忱。其致祭典禮，所司即察例舉行。 [...]

The Emperor ordered the Grand Ministers in his retinue: [...] Yu the Great's achievements are abundant and his virtue magnificent. Ten thousand generations forever rely on him. I should personally conduct the sacrifices to express the sincerity of my admiration. You should search for examples of how to conduct the sacrificial ceremony. [...]

禮部等衙門奏曰：欽奉諭旨，大禹系前古聖王，應行致祭，命臣等察典禮具奏，此真盛世聖典。伏察康熙二十三年，皇上軫念民生，巡行江左，遣官致祭明太祖陵，皇上親詣奠酒。今禹陵亦應如例，遣官獻香帛，讀文致祭。祭畢，皇上親詣奠酒。

The Board of Rites memorialized in reply: We have respectfully received the Emperor's command. Yu the Great is a sage king of antiquity, he should be honored with a sacrifice, so we have been asked to find and prepare a proper ritual ceremony. This truly is a flourishing age, following the model of the sages. We found that, in the 23rd year of Kangxi, the Emperor expressed great solicitude for the people's welfare and made an inspection tour to the lower reaches of the Yangtze, during which he sent officials to Ming Taizu's mausoleum to offer a sacrifice and afterwards personally poured a libation of wine. Now, Yu's tomb should be treated according to this precedent; an official should be sent to offer incense and silk and to read a sacrificial ode. Afterwards, the Emperor can personally pour a libation of wine.

奉旨：明太祖陵遣官致祭後，朕念未已，複親詣奠酒。今禹王陵朕應親詣致祭，著扈從諸大臣議奏。

The Emperor decreed: After an official had offered a sacrifice at the mausoleum of Ming Taizu, I thought this was not enough, so I personally went to pour a libation of wine. Now, whether for Yu the Great I should personally conduct the sacrificial ceremony was the question I asked the Grand Ministers in my retinue to discuss and memorialize about.

諸大臣議曰：從來祭歷代帝王，皆遣官行禮。今皇上省方，行近禹陵，特遣官致祭，皇上親詣奠酒，尊崇前代帝王之典，亦已極矣。臣愚以為似當仍如原議。

The Grand Ministers objected: We have investigated [how this was done by] the Emperors of the past, they all sent officials to conduct the sacrificial ceremonies. Now, if the Emperor on an inspection tour comes near Yu's tomb, to send an official to offer sacrifices and

personally pour a libation of wine already is an extreme show of respect for the Emperors of the past. In our humble opinion, it seems best to follow the original proposal.

奉旨：堯、舜、禹、湯，皆前代至聖之主，先遣官致祭，後朕親詣奠酒，未為允愜，朕應親詣致祭。著再議具奏。

The Emperor decreed: Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang were the greatest rulers of the past. For me to send an official to offer sacrifices and afterwards personally pour a libation of wine is not appropriate enough. I should conduct the sacrificial ceremony in person. I again ask for your opinions.

諸大臣再具奏：[...] 我皇上德邁前聖，學超百王，遣官致祭禹陵，親詣奠酒，已為尊崇之極，故臣等於皇上親祭之禮，未曾議及。今皇上聖不自聖，推隆往代帝王，厚自謙抑，以堯、舜、禹、湯皆前古聖主，欲親詣致祭，此真聖主崇古重道，萬世之令典。謹遵諭旨，祭文令翰林院擬撰，祭文內不書聖諱。應行典禮並祭物，令該督撫具備。

The Grand Ministers memorialized again: [...] The Emperor surpasses the former sages in virtue, and the monarchs of the past in erudition. To send an official to offer sacrifices and personally pour a libation of wine afterwards already is an extreme show of respect; this is why we did not propose that the Emperor personally conduct the sacrificial ceremony. Now, the Emperor is a sage without feeling superior; He praises the monarchs of the past, and is very humble Himself. To the sage emperors of antiquity—Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang—He personally wants to offer sacrifice. This truly is [the conduct of] a sage ruler respecting the past and stressing the Way, a model for ten thousand generations. We sincerely obey the Imperial edict and order the Hanlin Academy to draft a sacrificial ode which does not mention the Emperor's name. As for the preparations of the sacrificial ceremony, we ask the responsible Governor-general to complete them.

奉旨：此祭文內可書朕名。餘依議。

The Emperor decreed: In this sacrificial ode, my name may be mentioned. As for everything else, let it be as recommended.<sup>65</sup>

The Grand Ministers were focused on already established practices. However, they gradually conceded to Kangxi's individual demands. Kangxi clearly had given the matter some thought: Although the standard of the ceremony at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum five years earlier was already quite high, he must have felt that it still was not good enough. Of course, the emperor's orders had to be carried out, but the changing of the ritual needed a justification. By conceding step by step, the Grand Ministers made clear that the changes were demanded from the emperor and that they differed from established practices. In this way, they could extricate themselves from a delicate situation.

65 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 28/2/11 (vol. 2, 1832–1834).

After the Hanlin Academy had finished a first draft of the sacrificial ode, Kangxi was again not satisfied with it. He felt that “the sacrificial ode is most important” (祭文關係最要), and therefore decided to write it himself.<sup>66</sup> After solemn preparation, Kangxi finally conducted the ritual as he had imagined it. He led a group of Grand Ministers, imperial guards, and officials from the six ministries to the tomb of Yu the Great, where they kneeled three times and kowtowed nine times, followed by the emperor’s reading of the sacrificial ode.<sup>67</sup> Afterwards, he also “authored” an “Yuling song” 禹陵頌 (Ode to the Tomb of Yu), in which he expressed his great reverence for this past emperor:

緬惟大禹，接二帝之心傳，開三代之治運。昏墊既平，教稼明倫，由是而起。其有功於後世不淺，豈特當時利賴哉。朕自禦宇以來，軫懷饑溺，留意河防，講求疏浚，漸見底績。周行山澤，益仰前徽。爰作頌曰：下民其謐，聖人乃生。危微精一，允執相承。克勤克儉，不伐不矜。隨山刊木，地平天成。九州始辨，萬世永寧。六府三事，政教修明。會稽鉅鎮，五嶽媿靈。茲惟其藏，陵穀式經。百神守護，松柏鬱貞。仰止高山，時切景行。

Reminiscing about Yu the Great: He carried on the tradition of two emperors, and initiated the era of perfect governance of the Three Dynasties. He controlled the floods, taught agriculture, and enlightened human relations; that is why he rose [to become sovereign]. He greatly benefitted later generations, so how could we say only his age relied on him! Since I became emperor, I have empathized with the suffering of the people, and I have paid attention to flood prevention and the dredging of waterways; more and more, results can be seen. Travelling around the country, I increasingly admired the virtue of my predecessor. Hence I composed the following ode: “Because of the common people’s needs, the sage was born. He heeded the advice of being discriminating and uniform in face of the people’s restlessness and inability to follow the way.<sup>68</sup> He was hard-working and frugal, unassuming and unboastful.<sup>69</sup> Following the course of the hills, he cut down the trees; the earth was reduced to order, and the [influences of] heaven produced their complete effect. The Nine Provinces began to differentiate, and generation after generation lived in permanent peace. The six resources and three tasks [related to welfare of the

66 Ibid.

67 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 28/2/14 (vol. 2, 1835).

68 [Translator’s note: 危微精一 alludes to the famous 16-character passage in the “Da Yu mo” from the *Book of Documents*: 人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中。In Legge’s translation it reads: “The mind of man is restless, prone (to err); its affinity to what is right is small. Be discriminating, be uniform (in the pursuit of what is right), that you may sincerely hold fast the Mean.”]

69 [Translator’s note: These expressions also refer to the same passage of the “Da Yu mo” in the *Book of Documents*. The following verse equally relates to the *Book of Documents*, I continue to follow Legge’s translations.]

people] were completed, government was reformed and people were enlightened. The majestic Mount Kuaiji is as important as the Five Sacred Mountains. This is where he rests, His mausoleum a guide for later generations. The hundred spirits guard and protect him, pines and cypresses stand dense and erect. I look up to the high mountain; from time to time I follow his great path.”<sup>70</sup>

Kangxi was very dissatisfied with the dilapidated state of Yu’s mausoleum and ordered the Viceroy of Fujian and Zhejiang, Wang Zhi 王鷲 (?–1695), to command local officials to restore it. He also emphasized:

在昔帝王陵寢，理應隆重培護。況大禹道冠百王，身勞疏鑿，奠寧率土，至今攸賴。

The mausoleums and tombs of the monarchs of the past should be carefully maintained and guarded. Especially Yu the Great, the most virtuous of all kings, who labored to control the floods and pacified the realm, on whom we rely until today, how could we neglect him?<sup>71</sup>

Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang were the sage kings of Confucian tradition and therefore to be especially revered by later emperors. As a Manchu ruler who had conquered China, Kangxi demonstrated his admiration for the sage kings and embraced them as models of imperial rule by performing extraordinary rituals at Yu’s mausoleum. At the apex of his power, he thus expressed his wish to incorporate the Aisin Gioro clan into the line of legitimate Chinese rulers.

In 1699, the 46-year-old Kangxi visited the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum for a third time on the way back from his third southern inspection tour.<sup>72</sup> The officials accompanying him were initially against the idea:

傳諭內閣：明洪武為一代創業之君，朕前南巡兩次，俱特行祭祀，並親至陵寢禮奠。今巡幸至此，當仍往親祭。著大學士等議奏。

Instruction to the Grand Secretariat: The Hongwu Emperor of the Ming Dynasty was an epoch-making emperor. On my previous two southern inspection tours, special sacrifices were offered to him, and I personally payed my respects at his mausoleum. Now that my tour again has led me here, I should personally offer a sacrifice. Let the Grand Secretaries memorialize about this.

70 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 28/2/甲寅 (vol. 5, 522). [Translator’s note: The last verse alludes to poem 218 of the “Xiaoya” 小雅 (Minor Odes) in the *Book of Odes*.]

71 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 28/2/16 (vol. 2, 1837).

72 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 28/4/壬子 (vol. 5, 1042).

大學士伊桑阿、阿蘭泰議：前者乘輿兩幸江寧，已親至明陵醉酒，兼遣大臣致祭。今請專命大臣，不必更煩車駕。

The Grand Secretaries Isangga and Alantai memorialized: On the Emperor's previous two visits to Jiangning, He already poured a libation of wine at the Ming [Xiaoling] Mausoleum and also sent official to offer a sacrifice. This time, He should send an official and not bother to go there personally.

奏入，得旨：洪武乃英雄奮起、建功立業之主，不可與他君並。朕當躬往致奠。其祭文著撰擬進覽。

The memorial was handed in and given the following edict: The Hongwu Emperor rose with heroic force and achieved great things, no one can compare to him. I shall personally go and pay my respects to him. Let a sacrificial ode be drafted for this occasion and present it to me for approval.<sup>73</sup>

In the eyes of the Manchu ministers, then, further personal homage of the emperor at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum after the previous two visits would have seemed overly obsequious towards Zhu Yuanzhang. Kangxi, however, still thought that the Ming founder was a towering historical figure who well deserved such treatment. The emperor, of course, had the final say, so he sent the Minister of War and, simultaneously, Chief Minister of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices Xi Erda to offer a sacrifice. He then personally led the princes and Grand Ministers to offer their ritual greetings in front of the "Precious Castle." To add solemnity, Kangxi rephrased the sacrificial ode as follows:

惟帝，天錫勇智，奮起布衣，統一寰區，周詳製作，鴻謨偉烈，前代莫倫。朕曩歲時巡，躬修醑薦，景其遺轍，不囿成規。茲因閱視河防，省方南邁。園陵如故，睇松柏以興思；功德猶存，稽典章而可範。溯懷彌切，親酌重申，靈其鑒茲，尚期歆饗。

Heaven bestowed this Emperor with courage and wisdom. As a commoner He rose with force and spirit, united the realm and meticulously set up institutions. His brilliancy and achievements are unrivalled in the former dynasty. On past inspection tours, I personally poured [sacrificial] wine [at his mausoleum] and admired his legacy, that of a man unrestrained by convention. Now I am on a southern inspection tour for river defense. His mausoleum stands as before, the pines and cypresses are still aligned as planned; His achievements and virtue have remained, His decrees and regulations can still be followed. I feel ever closer to him, and personally brought him wine to reaffirm [our connection]. When His spirit comes to examine it, I hope He will enjoy this offering.<sup>74</sup>

73 "Kangxi ye ling jishibei xibei," 28.

74 "Ji Ming Taizu wen" 祭明太祖文 (in: *Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 41.8b-9a).

After the ritual, Kangxi bestowed the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum with the aforementioned four-character calligraphy, which succinctly summed up his understanding and recognition of Ming Taizu's place in history:

禦書“治隆唐宋”四大字，遣侍衛馬武、海青等捧示諸臣曰：此御筆為明陵題殿額者，明日早，命直郡王、誠郡王率大學士伊桑阿、阿蘭泰、張玉書同往行禮，安奉殿內。[...]

The Imperial Guards Ma Wu and Hai Qing carried the Emperor's calligraphy to his ministers with the following instructions: This imperial calligraphy is an inscription for the Memorial Hall of the Ming [Xiaoling] Mausoleum. Tomorrow morning, let the Princes Zhi and Cheng lead the Grand Secretaries Isangga, Alantai, and Zhang Yushu to the mausoleum and place [the calligraphy] in the hall. [...]

又傳諭曰：[...] 朕禦書“治隆唐宋”四大字，交與織造曹寅制匾，懸置殿上，並行勒石，以垂永久。

[The emperor] further instructed: [...] Pass my calligraphy to the Superintendent of Imperial Silk Manufacturing, Cao Yin, so he can make an embroidered banner [of it], which shall be hung up in the hall; furthermore, let it be inscribed in stone, so it can be preserved for eternity.<sup>75</sup>

The next day, the Princes, Grand Secretaries, and other officials went to the Memorial Hall of the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, respectfully set up the emperor's calligraphy, bowed, and retreated. The middle-aged Kangxi's sympathy towards the Ming founder was clearly displayed in his words and manner.

In 1703, on his fourth southern inspection tour, Kangxi only sent the Grand Secretary Maci (Chin. transcription: Ma Qi 馬齊, 1652–1739) to offer a sacrifice at the Xiaoling Mausoleum. He did not visit it in person,<sup>76</sup> which he later regretted. It is worth noting, however, that he invariably acted in accordance with etiquette norms throughout the western inspection tour in the same year and sent officials to offer sacrifices at the mausoleums of Kings Wen, Wu, Cheng, and Kang of Zhou, as well as at Han and Tang tombs. He emphasized:

文王、武王，皆古之聖君，非他帝王可比，且向以孔子聖人，已書朕名致祭矣，此祭文內亦須書名。

75 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei xibei,” 28–29.

76 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 42/2/壬寅 (vol. 6, 144).

The Kings Wen and Wu were sage monarchs of antiquity, no other monarch can compare to them. For a long time, we have taken Confucius to be a sage and I have signed the sacrificial ode for him; so I should sign these sacrificial odes as well.<sup>77</sup>

This detail, similar to his personal offering at Yu's mausoleum, clearly shows Kangxi's strong "sage monarch complex."

In 1705, the 52-year-old Kangxi payed his fourth visit to the Ming Xiaoling Museum on the way back from yet another southern inspection tour. He first sent the Minister of Revenue Xu Chao 徐潮 (1647–1715) "to offer sacrifice at Ming Taizu's mausoleum" (祭明太祖陵);<sup>78</sup> when he left Jiangning, he again led Imperial Princes and Grand Ministers to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum:

至明太祖陵，導引官引向中門。上命自東角門入，曰：此非爾等導引有失，特朕之敬心耳。既入，率諸皇子及大臣侍衛等行禮。

When they arrived at Ming Taizu's mausoleum, the guiding official directed them towards the Middle Gate. The Emperor commanded to enter through the gate in the eastern corner, saying: "It is not that you have led us wrong, but I want to show my utmost respect." When they had entered, he led the Princes, Grand Ministers and Imperial Guards in the ceremonial greetings.<sup>79</sup>

In choosing to not enter through the main gate but a side gate at the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, Kangxi certainly highlighted the enormous respect he had as the present emperor of the ruling dynasty for the Ming founder. As with the previous visit, his officials voiced their disagreement:

諭領侍衛內大臣等曰：回鑾時，朕詣明太祖陵行禮。

The Emperor instructed the Grand Minister of the Imperial Guards and others: On the way back [from the inspection tour], I want to pay homage to Ming Taizu.

大學士馬齊奏曰：皇上已經遣官致祭明太祖陵，祈停親詣行禮。

The Grand Secretary Maci memorialized: The Emperor has already sent an official to offer sacrifice at Ming Taizu's tomb, why stop to personally pay homage?

得旨：洪武素稱賢主，前者巡幸，未獲躬赴陵前，今當親詣行禮。

The Emperor decreed: The Hongwu Emperor truly was a worthy monarch. On my previous tour, I could not personally visit his mausoleum, now I shall go there to pay homage.<sup>80</sup>

77 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 42/11/丁巳 (vol. 6, 170–171).

78 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 44/4/丙戌 (vol. 6, 220).

79 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 44/4/庚寅 (vol. 6, 221).

80 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 44/4/己丑 (vol. 6, 220).

Although the officials directly opposed the visit this time, the emperor could not be deterred. He did not want to regret a missed opportunity again. Kangxi clearly saw Ming Taizu as an exemplary “worthy monarch” and always held him in great esteem. He thus had to visit Ming Taizu’s mausoleum in person. Regarding someone as equal is also of course a way to characterize one’s own position.

Kangxi’s fifth visit to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum took place in 1707, again on a southern inspection tour. This time, he first sent the Grand Secretary Maci “to offer sacrifice at Ming Taizu’s mausoleum” (祭明太祖陵).<sup>81</sup> He then went to pay homage himself:

乘步輦，由東石橋至大門下輦，由東門陞殿，行禮畢，回行宮。

[The Emperor] was carried over the Eastern Stone Bridge to the Great Gate. There He got off and climbed up to the Hall through the eastern gate. After the ceremonial greeting, He returned to His residence.<sup>82</sup>

The resistance of his officials to the visit was even more pronounced this time and voiced in a tone that would have previously been unthinkable towards the emperor:

大學士等奏曰：皇上前此臨幸江南，明太祖陵，或遣官致祭，或遣皇子致祭，亦有皇上親行灌奠之時。又重新廟貌，專人看守。自古加厚前朝，未見如此者。今皇上又欲往謁，臣等以為太過。況此行已遣大臣致祭，天氣驟熱，不必親勞聖躬往謁。

The Grand Secretaries memorialized: On His previous visits to Jiangnan, the Emperor either sent officials or Imperial Princes to offer sacrifices at Ming Taizu’s mausoleum; on some occasions, He even went personally to pay homage. Moreover, He let the mausoleum restore and sent people to attend it. Former dynasties have been treated magnanimously since antiquity, but never have we seen something like this. Now, that the Emperor again wishes to visit the mausoleum, His servants think this is too much. Especially since He already sent the Grand Secretary to offer a sacrifice and the weather has turned hot, the Emperor should not visit the tomb in person.

上諭曰：天氣驟熱，何足計耶。朕必親往。

The Emperor decreed: How could the hot weather affect my plans? I will certainly go.<sup>83</sup>

Kangxi was an ambitious and strong-willed ruler, who saw himself as an equal of the great emperors of the past and the sage rulers of antiquity. Nonetheless, he could not clearly state this to his officials. Indeed, even the grand officials did not entirely grasp Kangxi’s

81 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 46/3/庚申 (vol. 6, 291).

82 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 46/3/壬戌 (vol. 6, 292).

83 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 46/3/辛酉 (vol. 6, 292).

point of view, understanding his reverence for Zhu Yuanzhang as a strategic “magnanimity towards the former dynasty” (加厚前朝). This was even more true for simple officials: how could they ever hope to transcend mediocrity and attain sageness? On the other hand, the straightforward message to the emperor that “his servants think this is too much” (臣等以為太過) showed a serious lack of respect. Even for Manchu officials, this was a bit “too much.” It is conceivable that they realized this themselves and accordingly changed their position, citing instead a sudden turn of the weather to discourage the emperor from his intended visit. It is worth noting that Kangxi was already 54 years old at the time and not as strong or as healthy as in his younger years. Just half a year earlier, he had told his officials that he already felt that he had become weaker due to his advancing age. When he crossed the Yangzi facing strong winds during his first southern inspection tour, he was not afraid at all. Yet when he rode a boat on the river on later tours, he felt slightly uneasy. Finally, he remarks that “on last year’s tour, I was [even] scared seeing people crossing the Yangzi” (去歲之行，見人渡江者即為心悸).<sup>84</sup> But Kangxi obviously refused to give in to old age. He genuinely hoped to “meet” his hero at the mausoleum once again and held fast to this desire.

In the more than 20 years between his thirty-first and fifty-fourth birthday, Kangxi visited the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum five times. Such behavior cannot be explained away as merely superficial or strategic. If he had wanted to visit for appearances only, once would have been enough, just as his officials argued. For instance, Kangxi visited the Confucius Temple in Qufu only on the first of his six southern inspection tours. It certainly was a high-profile visit: Kangxi knelt three times and kowtowed nine times in the Dacheng dian 大成殿 (Hall of Great Perfection),<sup>85</sup> bestowed it with a plaque inscribed “Wan shi shi biao” 萬世師表 (Teacher’s model for ten thousand generations) in his own hand, and attended lectures by Kong Shangren 孔尚任 (1648–1718) and Kong Shangli 孔尚禮. Furthermore, he bestowed on Kong Yuqi 孔毓圻 (1657–1723), a direct descendent of Confucius and therefore bearer of the title Duke of Yansheng 衍聖公, a poem that he had written himself, entitled “Guo Queli shi” 過闕里詩 (Poem on Passing through Queli). He even left a revolving yellow canopy, a symbol of imperial power, at the Confucius Temple to express his “veneration for the sage” (尊聖之意). The Duke of Yansheng was effusive in his gratitude and praised the emperor’s calligraphy as “extremely wonderful” (備極其妙) and his poetic talent as surpassing that of Tang Xuanzong, whose reign had been the longest of the Tang dynasty. The accompanying Manchu and Han officials praised the “grand and solemn ceremony” (典禮隆備) and the “flourishing of ritual and propriety” (儀文之盛) that “surpass the standards of the past” (度越前古).

84 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 45/10/庚寅 (vol. 6, 272–273).

85 [Translator’s note: the main hall of the temple.]

They considered themselves lucky to have encountered august wisdom and felt “exceedingly joyful” (不勝欣忭之至). However, no matter how grand and solemn the ceremonies might have been, this visit and similar proceedings at the mausoleums of monarchs of the past were simply a matter of appearances. As the accompanying Han Academicians Sun Zaifeng 孫在豐 (1644–1689) and Gao Shiqi 高士奇 (1645–1704) noted in a report to the emperor:

我皇上躬詣闕里，盛舉儀章，正以宣揚聖化，蒸育群生。

That is the right way for Your Majesty to visit Queli [=Qufu] in person and hold a grand ceremony there, in order to propagandize Your sagemess and educate the public.<sup>86</sup>

Kangxi’s sympathy for Ming Taizu can also be discerned from his edicts on the compilation of the *Ming History*. His view on the evaluation of historical figures differed markedly from the literati’s view. In 1687, he expressed the following opinion to the Grand Secretaries responsible for the compilation:

從來論人甚易，自處則難，若不審己之所行，而徒輕議古人，雖文詞可觀，亦何足道？朕嘗博覽群書，凡古之聖帝明王，未敢漫加褒貶。

It is always easy to discuss other people, but a lot harder when it comes to oneself. If you do not examine your own deeds but merely and frivolously criticize those of people from the past, you might talk and write impressively; but is it proper? I have read widely on all the sage emperors and enlightened monarchs of the past, but I would not dare to easily pass judgement on them.<sup>87</sup>

Five years later, he was even more explicit:

諭大學士等：前者纂修明史諸臣所撰本紀列傳，曾以數卷進呈。朕詳晰披閱，並命熊賜履校讎。熊賜履寫簽呈奏，於洪武、宣德本紀訾議甚多。朕思洪武系開基之主，功德隆盛，宣德乃守成賢辟，雖運會不同，事蹟攸殊，然皆勵精著于一時，謨烈垂諸奕世，為君事業，各克殫盡。朕亦一代之主也，銳意圖治，朝夕罔懈，綜理萬幾，孳孳懋勉，期登邛隆。若將前代賢君，搜求其間隙，議論其是非，朕不惟本無此德，本無此才，亦實無此意也。朕自返厥躬，于古之聖君既不能逮，何敢輕議前代之令主耶。若表揚洪武、宣德，著為論贊，朕尚可指示詞臣撰文稱美。倘深求刻論，非朕意所忍為也。

Edict to the Grand Secretaries: For the compilation of the *Ming History*, many chapters of the basic annals and biographies have already been submitted. I have carefully read them and ordered Xiong Cilü to collate them. Xiong Cilü wrote a memorial in reply in which he heavily criticized the basic annals of [the] Hongwu and Xuande [emperors]. I

86 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 23/11/18 (vol. 2, 1254–1255).

87 *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 26/4/12 (vol. 2, 1617).

think that [the] Hongwu [emperor] was a founding emperor whose achievements were abundant and whose virtue was magnificent. [The] Xuande [emperor] preserved the accomplishments of previous generations and was a worthy ruler. Although their fates and deeds were different, they were both inspiring in their eras and their glorious deeds are handed down from generation to generation; they both devoted themselves entirely to their tasks as emperors. I also am an epoch-making ruler; my will is firmly focused on governing, unremitting day and night. I oversee all matters, diligent and hardworking, in order to achieve prosperity. I neither have the virtue nor the talent to compare the worthy rulers of the past and discuss their rights and wrongs, and this really is not my intention. When I examine myself, I cannot compare to the sage monarchs of antiquity, so how could I dare to pass judgement on the virtuous monarchs of the former dynasty! If you want to praise the Hongwu and Xuande emperors and give a positive evaluation, I can well instruct the writers accordingly. If you insist on a heavy critique, I do not have the heart to do it.<sup>88</sup>

In 1697, Kangxi issued another edict in which he gave clear directions:

觀明史，洪武、永樂所行之事遠邁前王，我朝見行事例因之而行者甚多。且明代無女後預政、以臣陵君等事，但其末季壞于宦官耳。且元人譏宋，明復譏元。朕並不似前人輒譏亡國也，惟從公論耳。今編纂明史，著將此諭增入修明史敕書內。

Looking at the history of the Ming dynasty, the deeds of [the] Hongwu and Yongle [emperors] surpass those of the former kings. In our dynasty, we have followed their example in many respects. In the Ming dynasty, empresses did not meddle with politics and inferiors did not command their superiors; in their final phase, however, they were ruined by eunuchs. The Yuan ridiculed the Song, but then they were ridiculed by the Ming in turn. I am not ridiculing the waning of a former dynasty as they have done in the past; I only follow the general opinion. Now, add this instruction to the edict on the compilation of the *Ming History*.<sup>89</sup>

In 1699, Kangxi dedicated the aforementioned inscription to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum: "His reign was more formidable than that of Tang and Song dynasties." (治隆唐宋) In a way, this was the final word on the evaluation of Ming Taizu. The Grand Secretary Zhang Yushu, who was accompanying the emperor, responded:

“治隆唐宋”四字，於明太祖極為確切。一經宸翰褒題，而史書遂有定論，臣等不勝欣仰之至。

88 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 31/1/丁丑 (vol. 5, 700).

89 *Qing shilu*, Kangxi 36/1/甲戌 (vol. 5, 922).

The four characters “zhi long Tang Song” are very precise on Ming Taizu. Now that the Emperor has written this praise, the verdict of the history books will follow suit. Your servants are exceedingly joyful.<sup>90</sup>

In the more than twenty years of dealing with Ming Taizu, Kangxi’s admiration for him apparently grew continually. He even established a spiritual connection. Initially, Ming Taizu was nothing more than the first emperor of the Han Chinese dynasty whom the Manchus had subdued. For Kangxi, however, he became a mirror image of an outstanding ruler, whose boldness of vision was an inspiration to him. Previous research has shown that Kangxi keenly learned from his ruling experience.<sup>91</sup> He spoke highly of Zhu Yuanzhang’s “Huang Ming zuxun” 皇明祖訓 (Instructions of the Ancestor of the August Ming):

朕遐稽載籍，近考前朝，凡裨治理之書，必殫精深之蘊，豈徒以其文焉而愛悅之已哉！《皇明祖訓》一書，萃列后之謨，兼眾智之美，至於去邪納諫之規，勤政慎刑之誠，內而宮闈之禮教，外而朝堂之政令，胥盡於斯焉。迨其後世子孫，漸至於陵替者，豈其貽謀之未臧歟？由不能善守之故也。朕披覽之際，心焉景慕，常以為鑒，因書以記之。

When I read about the distant past or examine the former dynasty’s recent past, I do my utmost to understand in all its profundity any book that could aid in governing. It is not the beauty of their writing I am interested in! The book *Instructions of the Ancestor of the August Ming* assembles strategies of imperial rule and, simultaneously, the beauty of general wisdom. It addresses the rules for the removal of corrupt [officials] and accepting the advice [of good ones]; admonitions on being diligent in governing and cautious in punishing; etiquette within the palace chambers; and the politics of the outer court; it treats all of these exhaustively. Did his descendants gradually decline because his teachings were not good enough? In fact, the reason [for the decline] was their inability to adhere to them. When I read this book, my heart fills with admiration, and I have often used it as a mirror. Thus I have written down this note.<sup>92</sup>

In taking sage rulers and brilliant monarchs of the past as his model, particularly Ming Taizu, Kangxi always attached importance to ruling virtuously. He was, moreover, diligent in government affairs and exerted himself to make the country prosperous. In the end, the Han literati recognized his efforts. About one and a half century later, in 1869, the famous scholar and statesman Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811–1872) praised Kangxi as

90 “Kangxi ye ling jishibei xibei,” 28.

91 Cf. Chang Jianhua 2010.

92 “Yue Huang Ming zuxun ou shu” 閱皇明祖訓偶書 (in: *Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 29.2ab).

meeting the standard of “splendid virtue and moral purity” (至德純行) of a Confucian sage, as “not having lost his charisma after hundreds of years” (閱數百載而風流未沫), and as having far surpassed the “extraordinarily wise and capable rulers” (英哲非常之君) Emperor Wu of Han and Kublai Khan. He could be counted as an equal of King Wen of Zhou, who was revered as a sage ruler among the literati.<sup>93</sup>

## Conclusion

History is an instantaneous process. Once it happened, it becomes an object of memory or oblivion. How it is remembered or forgotten is determined by intentional acts, but also limited by specific contexts and even deep-seated cultural traditions. If we compare the act of remembering history to sampling tea or tasting wine, what kinds of “lasting flavors” will remain for posterity? In telling the story of Kangxi and the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum, the present article has revealed three kinds of different “lasting flavors,” hence the title *History in Three Flavors*.<sup>94</sup> For Kangxi, the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum was a symbol with rich historical connotations that he used, simultaneously, as an instrument of power, a source of historical rationality, and a measure of value. First, history was made an instrument, completely lacking a subjective character, and thus something the ruler could freely use and manipulate. History then served as a mirror that presented long-established, paradigmatic historical experiences. As such, it had an independent existence which posterity could draw on for its own thinking to attain a certain measure of rationality. In a final step, history was made into a touchstone of significance, which comprised an established arc of cultural values. History could thus overcome the temporal limitations of a single lifetime or of individual values. One could find a place within it to establish one’s self and make one’s spirit immortal.

On the one hand, as techniques of power, the emperors’ personal visits to the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum as well as the compilation of the Ming History were efforts to reconstruct historical memory. They sought to overcome the antagonism between Manchu conquerors and the conquered Han Chinese and to make them “one family under Heaven.” Kangxi’s five visits to the tomb of the previous dynasty’s founder were mainly a show for the Han literati. As a rather small ethnic group, the Manchu rulers had no choice but to rely on their support. The way in which the Han literati remembered and understood

---

93 *Guochao xianzheng shilie*, preface by Zeng Guofan (“Zeng xu” 曾序).

94 This title was inspired by Paul Cohen’s book *History in Three Keys*. But while Cohen investigated from an epistemological perspective different ways of “knowing” history, this article examines from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, in a broad sense, the different ways history is used by posterity and which meaning it might take for posterity.

the history of the dynastic change from Ming to Qing was of decisive importance for the consolidation of the new dynasty. Kangxi's voluntary self-abasement and unprecedented ritual treatment of the conquered dynasty's founding emperor was a way to demonstrate his unbounded benevolence and splendid virtue. Official documents, public inscriptions, literati writings, and word of mouth highlighted the new ruler's image of benevolence and virtue and thus eased the cultural tensions in the historic memory of the Manchu conquest and dynastic change. Moreover, Kangxi successfully brought about a transformation of the prevailing narrative and explanatory patterns. He actively employed the core frame of traditional Chinese historical understanding, the "mirroring paradigm," to narrow the cultural gap between the Manchu and Han elites. What is more, by taking the initiative in interpreting history, Kangxi could gradually implement the transformation of the "memory agenda." Thus the problem that some Han literati wanted to preserve a certain ethnically connoted memory of "Han vs. Manchu," i. e. conquerors vs. conquered, was solved by first transforming the memory into a more general historical narrative of "past vs. present," the "rise and fall of dynasties," and, ultimately, into a concrete question of governance, namely, "order vs. chaos."

On the other hand, Kangxi's five visits to the mausoleum were clearly intended as more than mere political or strategic gestures. They rather reflected a kind of historical rationality and cultural consciousness which enabled Kangxi to transcend the boundaries of Manchu and Han. He actively absorbed and employed Confucian notions and Han Chinese understandings of history and made great efforts to enter the mainstream of Chinese civilization. To maintain their rule over the conquered Han territories, the Manchu, of course, had to absorb and employ Chinese cultural resources, particularly Confucian ones. All his life, Kangxi diligently studied the Confucian classics and the dynastic histories. He strove to join this age-old and extensive cultural system and to benefit from its rich resources of knowledge and spiritual wealth. In particular, he wanted to understand and put into practice its lessons on governing. History served him as a mirror which enabled him to absorb the lessons of the past and to think and act in a rational way. What is more, Kangxi was not content with being an ordinary monarch; by studying assiduously and with great perseverance, he hoped to overcome the limits of his personality, his ethnicity, and even his time, and to become one of the greatest emperors of history. Therefore, he ambitiously emulated the great Confucian sages and expressed his admiration for Yao, Shun, Yu, and Tang, the "sage monarchs of the past." Ming Taizu was the "brilliant monarch" closest in time to himself and thus a mirror image. His rich legacy and experience were especially apt for offering encouragement and drawing lessons. History thereby became a measure of value which helped the Manchu emperor to establish his purpose in life and even his cultural affiliation. He worked hard to convert himself from a "foreign ruler" into one of many "Chinese brilliant monarchs" and gradually adapted his "barbari-

an” dynasty to the mainstream of Chinese civilization. Naturally, these efforts also resulted in new contributions to the Chinese civilization.

Over the last ten years, new and lively debates have broken out among international Qing historians on the question of the Manchu’s sinicization.<sup>95</sup> In responding to the challenge of “New Qing History,” Chinese scholars have by and large tried to prove that the influence of Chinese civilization on the Manchus, starting with Kangxi, was rather clear and profound.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, on the basis of criticizing Han chauvinism and the “Sino–barbarian dichotomy,” the Manchus – from Yongzheng to Qianlong – gradually established their identity as Chinese and the legitimacy of their dynasty in the succession of Chinese dynasties throughout history.<sup>97</sup> Overall, Chinese and foreign scholars alike recognize that the Manchu rulers thoroughly studied and actively absorbed Han Chinese culture. They mainly diverge, however, in their interpretation of this fact. Was it only a political strategy of *yi Hua yu Han* 以華馭漢 (using Chineseness to control the Han Chinese), or was it a sort of cultural consciousness of *you Man ru Hua* 由滿入華 (Manchus becoming Chinese)? In fact, the two possibilities are inextricably linked and part of the same process: To “use Chineseness to control the Han Chinese,” the Manchu rulers had to get a grasp of the quintessence of Chinese civilization and history; but the process of familiarizing themselves with the latter also was a way of converting themselves “from Manchus into Chinese.” The Manchus, who had formerly placed themselves outside of the “Chinese” system, gradually became one of the bearers of this “Chinese” culture until they finally, together with the Han Chinese, ensured the continuation and advancement of Chinese civilization.

So-called *Zhonghua* 中華 (Chineseness) is an open and dynamic concept. Over an extended evolutionary period, *Zhonghua wenming* 中華文明 (Chinese civilization) has formed a relatively stable system of values and institutions. Simply put, it is the unified system of “government and education, rites and music.” The cultural connotation of “Chineseness” is also fairly clear: It denotes a free cultural tradition that people of different geographical, ethnical, and cultural backgrounds can study, understand, and use. In the process of doing so, they can moreover complement, modify, and advance it. There are certainly no fixed bearers of “Chineseness;” the most important standards for defining who belongs to Chinese culture are acquired cultural traits, not intrinsic ones like geographical and ethnical origins or ties of blood. Whether or not a person is Han Chinese, as long as they can grasp and implement this system of values and institutions, they are part and representative of “Chinese culture.” Thanks to his training by many erudite scholars

---

95 Rawski 1996; Ho 1998.

96 Huang Xingtao 2011.

97 Guo Chengkang 2005.

and study of Confucian classics and works of history over a long time, Zhu Yuanzhang could become familiar with and devoted to the *Book of Documents* despite his humble origins and limited cultural literacy. He could actively study the rich knowledge on governing and statecraft that it contained.<sup>98</sup> This is certainly not unrelated to the fact that he became an exemplary emperor in the history of China. Kangxi's case is quite similar to Zhu Yuanzhang. As recent research has shown, the Qing rulers developed superb ruling skills. They actively appropriated orthodox concepts of Chinese culture for their own use, and successfully incorporated the Jiangnan literati's value system and views on history by converting them into a source of legitimacy as a "unified" political model.<sup>99</sup> This article has told the story of Kangxi and the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum and, from the perspective of historical memory, has shown in detail the early Manchu ruler's active appropriation and even modification of Chinese culture. It thus hopes to provide supportive evidence for the openness and vitality of the concept of "Chineseness."

## References

- Bai Xinliang 白新良 et al. *Kangxi huangdi zhuan* 康熙皇帝传. Tianjin: Baihua wenyi, 2007.
- Chang Jianhua 常建华, "Ming Taizu dui Qing qianqi zhengzhi de yingxiang" 明太祖对清前期政治的影响, in: Zhu Honglin 2010, 313–344.
- Chi bei ou tan* 池北偶谈, by Wang Shizhen 王士禛. 2 vols. Qingdai shiliao biji congkan 清代史料笔记丛刊. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1982.
- Da Qing huidian* 大清会典 (Kangxi 康熙 ed.). Rpt. in 10 vols. Taipei: Wenhai, 1992.
- Guochao xianzheng shilüe* 国朝先正事略, ed. by Li Yuandu 李元度. Rpt. in 4 vols. Taipei: Wenhai, 1967.
- Guo Chengkang 郭成康, "Qingchao huangdi de Zhongguo guan" 清朝皇帝的中国观, *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2005.4, 1–18.
- Hay, Jonathan, "Ming Palace and Tomb in Early Qing Jiangning: Dynastic Memory and the Openness of History," *Late Imperial China* 20.1 (1999), 1–48.
- Ho, Ping-ti, "In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's Reenvision the Qing," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 57.1 (1998), 123–155.
- Huang Aiping 黄爱平. "Qingdai de Diwang miao ji yu guojia zhengzhi wenhua rentong" 清代的帝王庙祭与国家政治文化认同, *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2011.1, 13–20.
- Huang Xingtao 黄兴涛. "Qingdai Manren de 'Zhongguo rentong'" 清代满人的"中国认同," *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2011.1, 1–12.

98 Cf. Zhu Honglin 2010a.

99 Yang Nianqun 2010, 3–11.

- Kangxi qiju zhu* 康熙起居注. 3 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1984.
- “Kangxi ye ling jishi bei dongbei” 康熙謁陵紀事碑東碑, in: Ming Xiaoling bowuguan 2008, 26–27.
- “Kangxi ye ling jishi bei xibei” 康熙謁陵紀事碑西碑, in: Ming Xiaoling bowuguan 2008, 28–29.
- Lidai lingqin beikao* 歷代陵寢備考, by Zhu Kongyang 朱孔陽. Orig. published 1844. Rpt. Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling guji, 1990.
- Li Lin 李林. “Qingdai huangdi de nanxun yu dongxun” 清代皇帝的南巡与东巡, *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 1991.1, 29–32.
- Lin Lu 林璐. “Huangdi gong si Xiaoling ji” 皇帝躬祀孝陵記, in: Wang Huanbiao 2006, 128–129.
- Luo Xiaoxiang 罗晓翔. “Jinling genben zhongdi: Ming mo zhengzhi yujing zhong de fengshui guan” “金陵根本重地”—明末政治语境中的风水观, *Zhongguo lishi dili luncong* 中国历史地理论丛 2008.3, 22–29.
- Meng Sen 孟森. “Ming lie huang xunguo houji” 明烈皇殉国后纪, in his *Ming Qing shi lunzhu jikan* 明清史论著集刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959), 70–77.
- Meng Zhaoxin 孟昭信. *Kangxi pingzhuan* 康熙评传. Nanjing daxue, 1998.
- Ming Xiaoling bowuguan 明孝陵博物馆 (eds.). *Ming Xiaoling shiliao huibian (shang)* 明孝陵史料汇编 (上). Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi, 2008.
- “Nanxun biji” 南巡筆記, in: *Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 20.3a–8b.
- Qinding Da Qing huidian shili* 欽定大清會典事例 (Guangxu 光緒 ed.). 12 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1991 [rpt.ed.].
- Qingshi gao* 清史稿. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1976.
- Qingshilu* 清實錄. Rpt. in 60 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985–1987.
- Rawski, Evelyn Sakakida. “Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 54.4 (1996), 829–850.
- Shengzu Ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 聖祖仁皇帝禦制文集. Siku quanshu ed. Rpt. Taipei: Shangwu, 1983.
- Spence, Jonathan D. *Emperor of China: Self-Portrait of Kang-hsi*. New York: Vintage Books, 1988.
- Sun Jiang 孙江 (ed.). *Xin shi xue* 新史学, Vol. 8: Lishi yu jiyi 历史与记忆. Beijing: Zhonghua, 2014.
- Tinglin shi ji 亭林詩集, by Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682). Sibugongkan ed.
- Wang Huanbiao 王煥鑣. *Ming Xiaoling zhi* 明孝陵志, first published 1934. Edition with punctuation and textual notes by Zhou Yuwen 周钰雯 and Wang Wei 王韦. Nanjing: Nanjing chubanshe, 2006.
- Wang, Q. Edward [Wang Qingjia 王晴佳], and On-cho Ng [Wu Anzu 伍安祖]. *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2005.

- Wu Runkai 吴润凯. “Ye Ming Xiaoling: xiaotiao yidai butong bei” 谒明孝陵—萧条异代不同悲, *Shuwu* 书屋 2007.6, 40–44.
- Wang Sizhi 王思治. *Qingshi lungao* 清史论稿. Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1987.
- Xiao Feng 晓峰: “Qianlong di liu ji Ming Xiaoling” 乾隆帝六祭明孝陵, *Nanjing shizhi* 南京史志 1998.5, 45–46.
- Yang Nianqun 杨念群. He chu shi “Jiangnan”: Qingchao zhengtong guan de quelu yu shi lin jingshen shijie de bianyi 何处是“江南”—清朝正统观的确立与士林精神世界的变异. Beijing: Sanlian, 2010.
- Zhang Yushu 張玉書. “Sheng jia yi Ming Taizu ling song (you xu)” 聖駕詣明太祖陵頌 (有序), in: *Ming Xiaoling bowuguan* 2008, 559–560.
- Zheng Yuchao 郑玉超. “Kang Qian er di baiye Ming Xiaoling yuanyin tanxi” 康乾二帝拜谒明孝陵原因探析, *Zhongguo shiyou daxue xuebao (Shehui kexue ban)* 中国石油大学学报 (社会科学版) 2008.5, 82–85.
- Zhu Hong 朱鴻. “Qingdai renshi de Ming shisan ling ji Jingdi ling qinghuai” 清代人士的明十三陵及景帝陵情懷. Paper presented at the conference “Quanzhou hua xia Ming shi yanjiu zhi xin shiye” 全球化下明史研究之新視野, Taipei, October 2007 [online: [www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~tangsong/con/Pt16.pdf](http://www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~tangsong/con/Pt16.pdf)].
- . “Qing xi Zhongshan: Qingdai huangdi ji shiren baiye Ming Xiaoling de huodong” 情系鐘山—清代皇帝及士人拜謁明孝陵的活動, in: Zhu Honglin 2010, 345–370.
- Zhu Honglin 朱鴻林 (ed.). *Ming Taizu de zhi guo linian ji qi shijian* 明太祖的治國理念及其實踐. Hong Kong: Xianggang zhongwen daxue, 2010.
- . “Ming Taizu dui Shujing de zheng yin ji qi zhengzhi lixiang he zhi guo linian” 明太祖對《書經》的徵引及其政治理想和治國理念, in: Zhu Honglin 2010, 19–62. [Zhu Honglin 2010a]
- Zhu Zhuyu 朱铸禹 (ed. and annot.). *Quan Zuwang ji huijiao jizhu* 全祖望集匯校集注. Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2000.